

Bonni: [00:00:00] Welcome to the first episode of Teaching in Higher Ed. In this episode three things my children have taught me about teaching.

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Bonni: [00:00:22] Welcome to this episode of Teaching in Higher Ed. This is the space where we explore the art and science of being more effective at facilitating learning. We also share ways to increase our personal productivity approaches so we can have more peace in our lives and be even more present for our students.

Bonni: [00:00:44] So Dave is joining me today. This is Bonni Stachowiak and Dave is my husband.

Dave: [00:00:49] I'm glad to be here. Thanks for inviting me to join you on your first show. I'm so excited for you.

Bonni: [00:00:54] I thought if we were going to be talking about things that children teach us about maybe I should have on the man who I have children with since I know we have both learned a lot.

Dave: [00:01:03] It seems like a sensible guest choice to make.

Bonni: [00:01:06] What got me thinking about is I had lunch the other day with my friend and colleague. It's a person who is in a leadership role at a different

educational institution than I normally teach at. And we met at this great place called Strawberry Farms.

Bonni: [00:01:23] So if anybody listening is in Orange County go to the show notes at teachinginhighered.com/1 for the first episode notes and go there and click the link to if you've not ever eaten that Strawberry Farms it is fabulous.

Bonni: [00:01:42] And it's kind of a place that I have eaten at a lot with people that are in higher ed. My friend and our colleague who was one of our professors in our master's program took us there or took me there a number of times and I had the chicken Waldorf salad. That's all we're going to talk about because next we're going to get into the meat of the podcast. See what I did there?

Dave: [00:02:02] I like the transition with the chicken and the meat. Very nice.

Bonni: [00:02:05] Three things my children- our children - have taught me about teaching in higher ed. So Dave you know this first one we both get reminded of this on a pretty regular basis - - it's not often about me.

Bonni: [00:02:20] So I once was changing our son's diaper in the back of the car and got done with that (this is not one of those gross stories so you can keep listening) and he just - this was when he was about six months old - he just started looking at me. It was almost this spiritual connection.

Bonni: [00:02:41] I just I thought you know babies don't - they're not supposed to have that deep of eye contact with you and I keep waiting for him to look away and get distracted and he just kept looking with this smile that I thought there - there's just something beyond normal about this experience this little boy is just we have a connection.

Bonni: [00:03:03] It is unlike any other - he's never looked at me like this before and I thought it's almost - I wish someone else had been there so that they could

actually believe me when I said just what kind of eye contact this was and the connection that we had.

Bonni: [00:03:18] And I thought you know it's just not believable. And then I started to actually not believe it myself and I started to come up with what other excellent explanations are might be for this phenomenon.

Bonni: [00:03:30] And I realized I'm wearing sunglasses. That little boy's not looking at me he's looking at himself.

Dave: [00:03:39] In the sunglasses.

Bonni: [00:03:39] In the sunglasses.

Dave: [00:03:41] That's such a funny story when you told that - how excited you were of the connection you had with him.

Bonni: [00:03:47] So it's just kind of that reminder that it isn't all always about me and I think that's a really healthy thing to have in teaching is to have a healthy distance that we keep from ourselves. I care so deeply about the students that I teach and I don't want to have too healthy a distance.

Bonni: [00:04:02] I think it's great that we can be close with them and and encourage them and really care deeply and at the same time have that sense that it's often not about me and that's helpful to me too sometimes when students will have sort of triggers about me.

Bonni: [00:04:18] I teach a lot of 18 to 22 year olds and sometimes just as an example people kind of see me as sort of that authoritative mom figure and they might have a reaction of not being comfortable with or used to having a real strong woman in their life in a leadership role for example.

Bonni: [00:04:36] So I try to keep that in mind that sometimes are something else going on here. And in fact there was another student that comes to mind for me that I you know I've had this conversation so he knew he knew that but this was

the case I thought he was a jerk or that this dude was a complete jerk he'd come into class he was regularly late and I just thought this guy is just a jerk.

Bonni: [00:04:59] I mean that's OK. And one day he asked if you could meet with me and I thought OK here we go because this is where we get the excuses or whatever. And he shared with me that his dad was dying of cancer.

Bonni: [00:05:13] And I just one of those moments of you don't ever know what's happening on the other side of that exchange that you have with the student then it's not all about you. It's really powerful.

Dave: [00:05:23] I love the - we've we've talked about this on my show a couple of times - of servant leadership that philosophy of leadership of you are there to serve the people you're leading.

Dave: [00:05:33] And I think to something you told me recently of how you really see especially with the traditional age students that you have in your classroom most often you see your job as serving them of who they're going to be 10 15 20 years from now that you're not necessarily they're not like your - forgive the term - "customer" today.

Bonni: [00:05:55] Yeah.

Dave: [00:05:56] But that you are really working to develop them into the person that they're going to be 10 15 20 years from now. I really like that perspective. I think that that's a really healthy, mature perspective for any educator to have at any level. Almost even those of us that teach adults I think that that's really cool.

Bonni: [00:06:14] Thanks. The next one is you never know what they'll remember. So back to our son Luke- by the way anyone listening to our son Luke is just about two and a half now. And so he's a lot more communicative than our second child, who is Hannah who is now four months so I don't even have any sunglasses connection story with her.

Bonni: [00:06:34] Although she did roll over for the first time the other day and she does laugh - I mean not laugh but but coo an awful lot right now.

Dave: [00:06:41] She sure does. She's a cutey.

Bonni: [00:06:43] So about a month and a half ago Luke and I were going into Starbucks and I got a little chai tea and there's a there's a fountain outside of

this particular Starbucks that he loves to go over and visit. So we were walking outside of Starbucks over to where the fountain was.

Bonni: [00:07:01] And I'm holding him and all of a sudden a bird flew down a sparrow I believe it was just flew down and flew sort of fluttered on my head it landed on my head and then flew away and I didn't - I mean it was happened too fast for me to completely let out too much of a shriek or anything but I did kind of go "ahhhhhhh" and Luke didn't even see the bird do it.

Bonni: [00:07:26] But he he did hear my reaction to it and I talked to him about what had happened. And I did after that see a sign that said the birds were nesting nearby so they will be protective of their nests. I hadn't seen it of course before that and so it would be a week two weeks three weeks and even now six weeks later he will remember this.

Bonni: [00:07:51] He will say, "Mommy Birdie fly - hair!" He'll bring it up at dinner time. You know you've heard him do it Dave.

Dave: [00:07:59] Several times when you haven't even been there. And and then the story has evolved there's been a fire truck involved in the story. Now Luke - "Luke mommy fire truck hair birdie." Somehow a fire truck was involved in rescuing you.

Bonni: [00:08:13] Yes because fire trucks are wonderful because they come and help people when they're hurt.

Dave: [00:08:17] Luke and I do often see fire trucks in that parking lot so I have a feeling that that might have been part of the connection point for him. But yeah it's so funny that some other things that have happened that would be as unusual, he doesn't either remember or appear to remember but for whatever reason that one thing he latched onto and that is really a great analogy for teaching too that sometimes things we don't even remember saying as educators.

Dave: [00:08:44] Someone will come back and you know sometimes even two three four years later and they'll say "Oh, it was so amazing." And you're thinking in the back of your mind I don't even remember talking about that much less was it the focus of course or learning objective or anything like that. And but

that was the thing that person needed to hear at that time. That got them to the next point in their lives. And it's cool when that happens.

Bonni: [00:09:08] The other day I was at the place where Dave and I work out it's a community center. And our children go and they have childcare there it's wonderful. And so one of the gals was saying oh yeah this other guy that works here was saying that he was in your class a couple of years ago and how much he loved it and how it was a marketing class and how you brought your son in and you guys did experiments with him and how this completely meant so much to him that you would do that. And he even knew who Luke was when you brought him in.

Bonni: [00:09:37] And I'm thinking - - OK there's so many things wrong with this - - that never happened. We don't do "experiments" on children. I'm not a psychologist. Even if I was there's ethical things.

Dave: [00:09:47] Certainly our kids wouldn't be involved...

Bonni: [00:09:48] And then, you have to sign some you know releases and you wouldn't do it with your own children. So I'm thinking what on earth is she talking about?

Bonni: [00:09:59] And then I realize oh it was the marketing class well they had to write a marketing plan that semester on those subscription boxes. Anyone listening might be aware that subscription boxes are really taking off in the business world.

Bonni: [00:10:13] So there's the subscription box that you can get where you get the beauty supply products which is not our thing here in this house. There is the subscription box I just heard. Now they're starting to take over a lot of the podcasts that Dave and I listen to as the subscription boxes for your shaving needs, I guess. That's that's one of the sponsors of this show.

Bonni: [00:10:31] We don't have any sponsors yet but I'm sure in time it will be the shaving one that's going to come up.

Dave: [00:10:36] Sure. Teaching in Higher Ed is going to be their target market.

Bonni: [00:10:38] So for this student it was the subscription box which Dave and I subscribe to. That is for baby products Children products and so they had to write a marketing plan on that product and I had a friend who used to work

there and she really helped us out with giving the students feedback as they worked on the project a couple of years back.

Bonni: [00:10:59] I teach all of my classes and a blended learning format. So if they're over three days then one of the days is online and the other two days is in person. So this happened to be a semester where on a Friday for 50 minutes - was my only class that I taught there on campus in person. It didn't really make sense to pay someone to watch for a half a day - our son - at home so I would just take him up there for the hour and someone would watch him just for the hour that that I taught. And so when the subscription box would come one month we would talk about product and they would they would talk about what's the packaging look like what does the price look like etc.

Bonni: [00:11:40] Well when it came to talking about market research one of the forms of market research is - where it's observational. So that week I did have our son come in and they could all watch his reactions to opening the box and talk about well why is the tissue paper in there why is it yellow what do you think about that what you know what did what were his reactions to the various products that were in there what were my reaction so that's what this young man was remembering.

Bonni: [00:12:11] But it is interesting that that to him meant so much that his professor would do that that that's really what struck him about me and just something memorable that he learned from the class. And just that that sense of really getting to be a fly on the wall in the marketing process.

Dave: [00:12:27] It's always been really fascinating to me how much you've involved in an appropriate way like things going on in your life and in our lives and with our family and the things that students are learning in the classroom. You know products you use things our families do.

Dave: [00:12:42] And you know when we were buying a home you know just telling stories that really helped students to really grasp on to how what they're learning in a classroom connects to the real world and that's cool I really. I've always been in awe of how you do that so eloquently.

Bonni: [00:12:59] I liked it - in my last set of evaluations how many students commented a number of them about that I'm able to use a lot of current

examples and it's to anyone listening that doesn't regularly listen to podcasts of course.

Bonni: [00:13:12] I hope that you'll regularly listen to this one but just I'm amazed though listening to one of the ones Dave and I listen to pretty regularly especially when I'm teaching. I do it more is APM's marketplace and that's just a 30 minute show where every day they'll talk about what's going on in the economy but a lot of their stories are actually related to marketing and business too.

Bonni: [00:13:34] And that's where I get a lot of the examples I'll be driving up and every time I listen there's something that might relate to one of the classes so I feel like podcasts when I do those on my drive into work really help me get those current examples in there.

Dave: [00:13:48] Yeah there's so much that taking a little bit of time outside our roles as educators in the classroom just a little bit of investment of resources and time can go a long way in making real connections to the students outside the classroom and I know we're going to talk in the show and you're going to talk a lot about tools and resources for doing that. But more importantly the the why and the strategy behind it too.

Bonni: [00:14:14] The last one is it's the little things that add up to something big.

Dave: [00:14:19] You know this when I was thinking about this I was thinking about how you have been so intentional about trying to get Luke to pick up toys after he's done playing with toys.

Dave: [00:14:30] And I have to say that I was a little doubtful of your ability to produce results in this way not because of you but just because of Luke being two - not even two and a half years old. I just didn't think that he'd - with a lot of consistency - do it.

Dave: [00:14:47] I knew he'd do it on occasion and we put forth a lot of effort into it. And I think it was probably a month or two ago that you'd decided that it would be really good if we as a family would encourage him to pick up something every time he left a room.

Dave: [00:15:00] So you know even if he didn't pick up a lot just to pick up a couple of things. And so we've been doing that with consistency both of us. And even if we're out somewhere = we visit someone else's home or we visit a place

where you know like at the gym where there's a little child room that he has to pick someone up even if he didn't have to take it even if he didn't take it out.

Dave: [00:15:17] And it's been really amazing to me the last week or two - that often one of us will now ask him to pick up something and he'll pick up everything and we don't even have to ask him a second time and he's not and he's young like he's just the little kid.

Dave: [00:15:30] And yet he has learned that that's a really important thing to do because of the consistency over time and this morning he was picking up - you guys were leaving - he picked up a whole box of toys. You asked him to do it one time or maybe twice and he picked up a whole box toys and put it away.

Dave: [00:15:46] Even put the lid on them. I was really amazed. I just think that that's such a great example of how consistency is so important it's not being a superstar in one moment. It's being consistent over time as a parent and I think that there's a lot of parallels there for educators too of it's not being a superstar giving the perfect lecture on a particular day although that's certainly cool to do when that happens but it's more about the consistent investment that we make in students over a period of time.

Bonni: [00:16:17] And I even think about I take roll every day and I'll put a roster in the back and they sign in on that and usually will have three or four spaces worth a day's worth for them to sign in so I don't waste that much paper with every day a different thing of paper.

Bonni: [00:16:33] But that to me is just that regularity where they get used to it every day they come in. They know they're getting held accountable for it. There are some professors who at that level decide not to take roll.

Bonni: [00:16:44] And you see a lot more students that will miss. And so I've actually had students who say they appreciate that consistency at the undergraduate level. Now at the graduate level of course that consistency looks a little different.

Bonni: [00:16:56] But I've had students who comment that they appreciate how quick they get back to them over e-mail especially at that level as they're all working professionals and have much to balance and so they appreciate that

they're able to get a response from me fairly quickly. The next part of our show is where each one of us or one of my guests will share an EdTech tool.

Bonni: [00:17:19] So the EdTech tool that I'm going to share is called Canva, Canva.com. There's a link to it in the show notes again those show notes are at teachinginhighered.com/1.

Bonni: [00:17:29] And Canva is just this phenomenal graphic design web site for all of us that aren't graphic designers but would like a little bit of help - you go up there and they have all kinds of templates - every kind of template you might imagine whether it's a template for social media...

Bonni: [00:17:44] One of the things that really strikes me is on Twitter if you put a quote up there that's actually in a picture. How much more visibility it gets. I mean the numbers are staggering. Or if you want to have on your Facebook page you want to have one of those great photos at the top the cover photos there's already some precise graphics and some templates for you to be able to do that or in your teaching if you want a nice PowerPoint slide that's well designed. All these different templates are up there and you can use your own photos.

Bonni: [00:18:16] Or you could use their photos they have a number of photos that are free and then how they make their money which is always an important question to me to know about when you're using a site how they make their money by selling you when you buy their graphics.

Bonni: [00:18:29] So if you use one of their pictures that is not one of the free ones it's a dollar which is a lot by the way for a for an image. If you buy them in bulk like David and I do, you can get that down to about 15 cents.

Bonni: [00:18:39] But if you're just using one or two it's not a bad deal to pay a dollar to get a really nice image and maybe use that for an invitation to something that your institution that will really give that polished graphic look and of course a lot less than if you were to go out and pay a designer.

Bonni: [00:18:54] And will probably look more polished than if you have a less than stellar designer student who aspires to that but isn't quite there yet. So that's that's Canva.com and Dave I know you've got a recommendation to.

Dave: [00:19:07] I do. I have been using for about six months now a software product called Omni Outliner. It's produced by the Omni group. This particular

recommendation is a Mac-only software recommendation but it's a really powerful one and if you use a mac I think it's something to definitely check out what Omni Outliner does is it's essentially an outlining tool.

Dave: [00:19:29] And it allows you to kind of do a stream of consciousness of just getting your ideas down on screen. And there's a iPad app that goes along with it too so you can use that if you're a tablet person and you can then take in really a range the outline really easily so you can group similar things in the same way you can format it beautifully.

Dave: [00:19:52] I use it also for recording we do podcast because you can actually add an audio and video and links and all kinds of stuff. It's like a multimedia rich outlining program. And I'm I teach a few classes here in a master's program.

Dave: [00:20:05] And so I'm going to be utilizing this for my lecture notes and class notes. I haven't really found a good solution for that body that's worked over the years. A lot of times I've kept like my my lecture notes or class notes in Evernote. And that's fine.

Dave: [00:20:21] I mean I can follow along but I find that anytime something changes I'm just always reformatting stuff and it just never seems like I've got a

good system for that. And I really think omni outliner going to be great and also a good if I choose to to then share those notes with the students as well.

Dave: [00:20:35] It provides lots of export options to do that really effectively so something to check out. If you're a Mac person and it's by the Omni group and it's a great great tool and a great resource so check it out.

Bonni: [00:20:48] Thanks Dave. And thanks to everyone for listening today to the first episode of Teaching in Higher Ed.

Bonni: [00:20:56] We are up on Facebook if you'd like to join us there just do a search for Teaching in Higher Ed and go over and like that page and you'll see our updates there.

Bonni: [00:21:05] I am on Twitter @Bonni208 and Dave is on Twitter.

Dave: [00:21:12] @DaveStachowiak and we'll have a link in the show notes as well. Can I just say I'm really excited about this show.

Bonni: [00:21:18] Oh I'm so glad. I'm excited too.

Dave: [00:21:19] You know there's there's so much investment in research in higher ed as there should be but there's not a lot of investment and dialogue about really great teaching. I'm really excited to see what happens.

Bonni: [00:21:30] Hope you'll listen next time.

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