

remove shackles that might restrict the learner from pursuing exploration that can bring about experimentation, discovery, and self-discovery. Teachers should be free-ers.

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CHAPTER 9

Building a Safe Community for Learning

Mara Sapon-Shevin

Visiting my students in the field, I have the opportunity to go into a lot of classrooms. I get to absorb little snatches of conversation, notice what hangs on the walls and how the room is arranged, observe a wide range of lessons and management strategies. And always, if I allow myself to notice, I have feelings about what I see and hear. I enter one classroom and am immediately struck by a feeling of gloom—tension, uneasiness, silence or bickering, a sense that all is not well in the world. The teacher is yelling, threatening, brow furrowed and intense, unhappy with this stance but somehow resigned to it. Entering another classroom, the easy joyfulness strikes me just as quickly—students talking, sharing, heads bent together over a shared project, the teacher talking, laughing, smiling, joking, the atmosphere light and alive with energy. How does one make sense of this contrast? Luck of the draw? Did one teacher just get all the “bad students” and another teacher the “good ones”? Explanations that center around “What can you expect from students who come from backgrounds like these?” or “When you teach in the city you have to yell to establish and maintain discipline” ring false when the two classrooms described above are in the same building, at the same grade level, drawing from the same population of students.

Teaching involves making an immense number of decisions, and all these decisions have an impact on how students will learn, how they will treat one another, and what the classroom atmosphere will feel like:

Mr. Rimaldi passes back the math exams—in descending order of grades. By the time he gets to the bottom of the pile,

many of the students are snickering. Jason, who receives his last, is trying to act casual, but he shifts in his chair and his discomfort is clear. Another student calls out, "Way to go, Jason."

Ms. Herbert takes roll in the morning. After each absent child's name is noted, she comments that he or she will be missed and asks for volunteers to copy assignments, take handouts, and call the student that evening. She points out that the classroom community is not complete and expresses her hope that it will be restored soon.

Ms. Boyle talks excitedly about the upcoming Christmas holiday. She describes, at length, her own plans and the Christmas activities that will take place in class—a play, a party, decorations, singing, and an assembly. Almost as an aside, she remembers and adds, "Of course, not everyone celebrates this holiday," and then continues detailing the schedule.

When Mr. Danvers returns to his class after recess, he finds that one of the students has called the class to the rug for an emergency meeting. There has been an incident of racial name calling on the playground and the students want to discuss it. Students share what happened and generate a plan for addressing the problem with the students involved. As a group, they agree to meet again in a week to follow up on what has happened.

Each of the scenarios described above reflects something about classroom community. The kinds of decisions these teachers have made—often decisions within other decisions—have implications for the ways in which students will interact within the classroom and beyond. Deciding to return papers by grade has an impact on how Jason sees himself and is seen by others. Ms. Herbert's style of roll taking and attention to absentees change the ways in which students will talk about and respond to returning students. Ms. Boyle's apparent disregard for cultural, economic, and religious differences in planning a Christmas curriculum will affect Marya's willingness to talk about Kwanzaa, Noah's comfort in talking about Chanukah, and Paul's openness in describing his family's hard times which will make Christmas difficult for them. Mr. Danvers's establishment of class-

room meeting times and spaces and his comfort with student initiation and leadership provide opportunities for students to think together about important issues like racism.

Teacher education programs have courses called Math Methods and Curriculum Design, but rarely is there a course entitled Building Safe, Inclusive Classrooms or Creating Hospitable Communities. For the most part, little direct attention is paid to issues of classroom climate and student-student interaction; such concerns are sometimes subsumed under topics such as classroom management or curriculum planning, but rarely are teachers encouraged to explore and strategize about how community is created and nourished. And so I wish to share here some of my thinking about the importance of community building and the ways in which such concerns must assume primary rather than secondary status in thinking about teaching.

I begin all my classes and educational presentations with singing. I teach a song to the whole group, often one about community or connection, and encourage full participation. Hesitant voices and embarrassment generally abate as the collective of strong voices produces a powerful and pleasing sound. And then I ask, "Why did I begin with singing?" Generally, people answer, "Because it's fun"; "Because it is something we should be doing with children"; "Because it helps break the tension." And often, someone will comment, "Because it builds a sense of community—because we sound better together than we would individually." From that point of departure, we discuss what makes a community and explore times when the students or participants have experienced a sense of community. People share memories of hiking trips, school plays, church organizations, political rallies, and other times when they worked together toward a common goal. Words like "friendship," "trust," "respect," and "caring" become part of the discussion as people describe the ways in which the community transcended individual differences and difficulties.

My next question is harder: "Well, I just led the first song; which of you would feel comfortable coming up here to lead the next one?" A few brave hands are raised. "Well then," I continue, "which of you would rather die first?" There is always nervous laughter and a spate of hands. And then the final, most central question is posed: "For those of you who would rather die first, what would it take—what conditions would have to be met—for you to be comfortable coming up to lead a song?"

"I'd have to know a song." "I'd want someone to do it with me."

"I'd want to know that everyone else would be doing it too." And then, the bottom line: "I'd want to be promised that no one would laugh. That no one would make fun of me or embarrass me." They want *Safety*: the safety to learn and to fail; the safety to show oneself fully and be appreciated or at least supported; the safety to succeed and the safety to be imperfect; the safety from humiliation, isolation, stigmatization, alienation from the group. This is the essence of community. A community is a safe space to grow, a space that welcomes you fully, that sees you for who you are, that invites your participation, and that holds you gently while you explore.

Can classrooms be made safe? In a time when keeping children from physical harm seems difficult enough, can we create classrooms that also feel psychologically safe? Emotionally safe? Can we create classrooms that welcome children for who they are, give them opportunities to know one another in a deep way, and encourage their interaction? This, to me, is the most important challenge to any teacher: creating a space safe enough for students to be themselves, to stretch toward others, to learn, and to help one another.

In order to focus on community building as an essential component of teaching, one must accept the following premise: *Time spent building community is never wasted time*. Community building is not what you do if you have time, or only for the first 2 days of class. Building a solid, safe community must be a priority and an ongoing commitment. Many of the tasks that teachers wrestle with throughout the school year can be more easily negotiated if there is a good classroom community. Individualizing instruction is less likely to be met with complaints ("Why doesn't Michael have to do the same problems?") when students know and understand one another's individual differences. Cooperative group work, fast becoming an organizing principle in many classrooms, requires a firm foundation of positive interpersonal skills in order to be successful, and the everyday conflicts that occur in classroom settings can be resolved far more smoothly when students know and trust one another.

In a recent course called Cooperative Classrooms, Inclusive Communities, my coteacher, Sarah Pirtle, and I spent a full hour talking about class norms and agreements with the group. We discussed and agreed to norms of confidentiality so that people could share freely without fear that their words would come back to haunt them. The class agreed to work at implementing a standard of "no put-downs of self and others." The ensuing discussion—"What if I really am bad at something and want to say it?" and "What if someone else says something that I find offensive?"—led us to establish

additional procedures for resolving conflicts in ways that felt honest and forthright. The time spent engaging in this discussion was not something we rushed through in order to get to the heart of the class—the "real content." Having this discussion together, modeling ways of speaking, asking questions and disagreeing respectfully, and acknowledging the importance of having such a discussion was the content of this class.

Later in the week, a discussion of racism in American schools produced considerable discomfort and even anger. One student's comment was difficult for the others to hear, and the temptation to marginalize that student was evident. But Sarah and I, as teachers, were able to remind the students of our agreements about "no side conversations" and "talking to people directly about what's bothering you" and to urge them, as they left for lunch, to remember that our class was committed to hanging together through adversity so that we all could learn and grow, to open and honest discussion, and to listening well to one another. What might have been a major disruption in the classroom and the occasion for the isolation of particular students became, instead, a real-life example of the importance of setting a tone, of making the goal of community explicit, of taking the time to notice and care how people are being treated by others.

Although we all might agree that having a community is important, how do we know when we have one? What are some of the markers of community, and how can teachers foster a genuine sense of connectedness and concern in the classroom? Student teachers returning from the field often share observations regarding the ways in which students interact, and these can be regarded as indications of the quality of the classroom community—a way of "taking the community's temperature" as an indication of its health:

In one classroom, the students are assigned to read with a partner every day. They can go wherever they want in the classroom, and they take turns reading to each other. The teacher selects these partners by drawing two tongue depressors (with students' names on them) out of a can. It is noticeable that when the teacher announces the selection—Freda and Manolita, Jeremy and Shamira, Nicole and Danielle—there are no groans, no "Oh, yuck"s, or "I'm not reading with her." This is a healthy community.

In the cafeteria, children are teasing one another about what is in their lunches. "You eat tofu—that's disgusting." "Why

doesn't your mother pack you a real lunch?" "How come you don't eat meat—that's weird." One child is reduced to tears and dumps her lunch in the wastebasket. This is a community that needs work.

In a school that includes students with disabilities as full members of regular classrooms, a boy is helping a classmate learn to navigate on a three-wheeler in the hallways. A visitor stops, addresses the boy, and asks, "What grade are you in?" "I'm in sixth grade," he replies, "and [indicating his friend] so is she." The message is clear: She may not talk, but she's part of our class. Don't leave her out, even in your question. This is an inclusive community.

What are the underlying values and priorities that support community building? How can classrooms be structured so that they move toward cohesion and support rather than toward fragmentation and distancing?

COMMUNITIES PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES TO SHOW OURSELVES FULLY

A safe classroom community is one in which students are comfortable showing themselves, being themselves, and being honest about who and what they are. Think about your friends. Who are the friends who know you really well—and still like you? Aren't they the ones who have seen you at your best, but also at your worst? The ones to whom you respond with the truth when they ask how you are, and you're not doing well? The ones who listen well? How does one create that kind of safety in the classroom?

I often begin class with "News and Goods." We take turns going around the room with each student offering something good that has happened in his or her life recently. In the beginning, the offerings are often limited: "I saw a good movie last night"; "I got a new sweater yesterday." As the group members begin to know and trust one another, they share more fully: "I had a wonderful talk with my best friend last night and I feel really good about our relationship"; "I found out that my sister is pregnant and I'm going to be an aunt." And sometimes, "I have nothing good to share—my whole life is a mess," to which others may respond with sympathy and support; often a touch on the hand is offered by the person in the next seat.

Students are allowed to "pass" if they wish, and no one is forced to share. But there are also firm guidelines about how the group listens—no interruptions, no laughing, no snickering, no remarks. Each person's turn is sacred—his or her time for personal sharing—and the structure is not competitive. I explain repeatedly that we can figure out ways to be supportive of one another. One person's triumph in no way diminishes another's. Patty's delight at passing her math test is in no way minimized by the fact that Larry got a perfect score on his. We are, each of us, working on different things, struggling with different issues. We can support one another. It is possible for us to be proud of ourselves and of one another when the competitive element is removed.

Teachers working in classroom settings that include students with disabilities are especially conscious of the need to establish an atmosphere in which every person's accomplishments can be noted and appreciated. Karen's learning to tie her shoelaces is a major triumph for her, even though her classmate Morgan has been tying hers for years. Annabel's struggle (and victory) over spelling is worthy of celebration because she has worked hard and improved. It is not celebrated only if it is the "best" spelling paper or a "perfect" paper.

It is difficult for many people to accept compliments. They hem and haw and look the other way. "Thanks for saying I'm pretty, but actually I've gained weight and I'm fat"; "The report wasn't really as great as you think—I left out an important part and it should have been better." Accepting appreciation from others is problematic, particularly for women, because often we have not experienced the safety to be proud of ourselves. Feeling "too good" about yourself can feel dangerous, like looking for criticism. So we have learned to diminish our own accomplishments, to put ourselves down before someone else does. Creating a space in which people can be proud of themselves should be a central organizing principle of classrooms. Delighting in and sharing genuine accomplishments is distinguishable from "bragging" or "showing off" when it occurs within the context of community; arrogance, egotism, and self-absorption are fueled by competition, insensitivity, and real or perceived scarcity of success, all of which are antithetical to true community. Teachers must ask themselves: How can I create multiple opportunities for people to share and celebrate their triumphs and ensure that all people in the class are acknowledged? How can I make that opportunity safe for all class members? How can I remove the competitive orientation that often surrounds feeling good about oneself?

A classroom that feels safe to students allows them to be proud

of their accomplishments, but it also allows opportunities to be honest about their needs and to ask for support. In a seventh-grade classroom, I heard a boy proclaim loudly, "I don't understand the math." Immediately, three students rushed over to help him. This student had the safety to share his frustration and to ask for help. The teacher in that classroom had provided a space in which such a request could be issued and had established classroom norms that allowed other students to offer support and assistance.

I was stunned when my older daughter came home from seventh grade one day and announced, "Today at lunch, I learned to tell time."

"What do you mean?" I asked. "You already knew how to tell time, didn't you?"

"No," she explained, "actually, I never understood it. I always had a digital watch so I never really learned the other way. But I told some kids at lunch and they showed me how it worked and now I understand."

I was awed that she had felt enough safety with her peers—other 12- and 13-year-olds—to let them in on what had been a well-maintained (even from her mother) secret. And I was further touched by the fact that they had responded to her not with scorn or derision but with support and teaching. This experience speaks volumes to children's abilities to learn quickly and painlessly when they feel supported and safe.

COMMUNITIES PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES TO KNOW OTHERS WELL

Opportunities to show ourselves fully provide the possibility of knowing others well. When a safe community has been created and maintained, we can notice Rena's physical characteristics and the fact that she reads well, but we can also learn that she is struggling with her fear of the dark and her worry about nuclear war, that she is having a hard time with her older sister at home and is hoping to be a carpenter when she grows up. We can learn enough about Rena, in her many facets, to enable us to find similarities and differences, spaces and ways to connect.

Many years ago, I gave workshops for teachers on how to teach students about differences and disabilities. One teacher approached me after such a workshop and said something that profoundly changed my orientation to the issue. "You know," she said, "my spe-

cial education students are painfully aware of the ways in which they are different from other students. What they don't see are the ways in which they are similar."

Since that time, it has become even clearer to me that we must help students see both the ways in which they are different and the characteristics, needs, fears, and skills they share. Focusing exclusively on differences can result in the ultimate alienation: There is no one here like me, so I must be all alone. Focusing exclusively on similarities can result in making children's unique characteristics invisible, for example, not noting that Shamika is African American or that Nicole uses facilitated communication to talk. One teacher put up a grid in her classroom, with each child's name written across the top and down the side. During the course of the year, they were responsible for finding one similarity with every other person in the class. In the square that was the intersection of their own name, they were asked to share one thing that was unique about themselves.

I have my students engage in a diversity treasure hunt during class. They circulate with papers and pencils and are asked to find people who fit into different categories:

Find someone who grew up with an older relative.

Write his or her name here _____.

What's one thing that person learned from the older relative?

Find someone whose parents come from another country.

Write his or her name here _____.

What's one tradition or custom that person has learned from his or her parents?

Find someone who has a family member with a disability.

Write his or her name here _____.

What's something that person has learned by interacting with the person with a disability?

The rules are that you can write someone's name down only once, that is, you must talk to 10 different people if there are 10 items on the list. Students are encouraged to seek out people they don't know. The room typically buzzes with stories, laughter, delight in finding someone who fits into a category. People often find themselves sharing and listening to stories that they don't typically tell: about a younger brother with cerebral palsy and how hard it is when people stare or make fun of him; about a grandmother from Italy who makes wonderful cakes. After people are finished, they are asked to share

what they have learned. People listen attentively as Michael shares what he learned from Janet, as Carmen shares the funny story she heard from Dwayne. Students begin to realize connections that they can build on: Discovering a shared interest in turtles leads to an exchange of books; hearing about someone else's triumph in learning to swim after many years leads to an offer to go to the pool together.

The classroom conversation and interaction after this exercise are always deeper, richer. The safety of the community and the structure for sharing allow people to see one another and to be seen as well. Teachers have also used this activity to alter students' perceptions in specific ways. Juan, who has just moved from Mexico, has been isolated because of his language difference. The question that says "Find someone who was born in another country and can teach you a phrase in his or her language" makes Juan a necessary and valued part of the group activity; his differences are honored, not hidden, acknowledged, not ignored.

Just as learning to say nice things about oneself is challenging, learning to notice and appreciate others (and accept that appreciation) can be equally difficult. One teacher designates a "Child of the Week" (with each student getting a turn). That child brings in things to share (family artifacts and photographs, if they are available) and is interviewed by classroom reporters (with the right to pass on any question). The week ends for Tyler, the child in the spotlight this week, with every student contributing a page to a book whose theme is "what we like about Tyler." The teacher reports that she has had to do very little coaching about how to write "nice things" and that the students notice and appreciate many different qualities and characteristics of the child: "Tyler has a good sense of humor. He makes me laugh." "Tyler let me share his sandwich when I forgot my lunch money last week." "Tyler is really good at drawing pictures of dinosaurs."

Other opportunities abound for noticing others and appreciating them. My daughter Dalia developed a Thanksgiving ritual that I have translated for the classroom. She gives each person at the table enough little slips of paper for every other person and asks them to write one thing they like or appreciate about each person. Little people who cannot write are encouraged to draw or dictate their messages. All the slips of paper are put in a box, and the box is then passed around the table. Each person takes a turn drawing out a slip of paper and reading it: "I like Annegret's warmth and the way she reaches out to people"; "I like the way Lucy giggles when something is funny and makes everyone else giggle too." The slip of paper is then given to the person it is about. Although receiving compliments gra-

ciously is difficult for some people, I have never yet seen a person who did not take these little slips of paper home, tucked in a purse or a shirt pocket. Many people have reported, years later, that they still have these pasted on their mirrors or on their desks.

At the end of a class that had used cooperative learning family groups all semester, I gave each member a piece of paper that said:

My name:

My group says that I'm . . .

I want to remember that . . .

Each group member wrote affirmations and appreciations for every other group member: "I love the way you kept us going when we got discouraged"; "I appreciate how much you know about different topics and your willingness to share." Each person completed the last section individually. "I want to remember that I have friends in this class"; "I want to remember that other people think I'm smart and worth having around."

As the level of safety increases, we can encourage students to see and know one another at deeper levels. In Australia recently, I asked teachers to bring in and share objects that were important to them. People brought seashells, old photographs, a precious ring, a treasured poem, and an old doll. After they had shared these objects with the group, I asked not "What did Sharon share?" but "What did you learn *about* Sharon from what she shared?" People's responses were profound: "I learned that relationships are very important to Susan—she cares deeply about her friends." "I learned that Keith loves nature and that he really notices the beauty around him." And, perhaps most touchingly, about a woman whose outward reserve could have been perceived as standoffishness, "I learned that there's a lot more to Mary than meets the eye. She really has a deep, spiritual side to her." Several were quite moved during the sharing experience. The joy of being seen so clearly and so fully by relative strangers was overwhelmingly affirming.

COMMUNITIES PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES TO REACH OUT, CONNECT, AND HELP

The third component of community building is the chance for students to interact with one another positively, helping and support-

ing one another, teaching and sharing their skills and strengths. When an atmosphere has been created in which people freely share who they are and learn about others, the possibilities for connection are boundless. For example, I have students complete a classroom yellow pages in which they designate those areas in which they can give help or support:

HELP OFFERED:

Able to teach double Dutch jump roping
Know how to make friendship bracelets
Am good at remembering my assignments

Students can also ask for help or support in a range of areas:

HELP WANTED:

Want to learn to play four-square on the playground
Need help figuring out what to do with someone on the playground who is bugging me
Want support for not wasting time and getting my work done so I don't have to miss recess

Students are encouraged to find and support one another. The class is not divided into "those who need help" and "those who give help." Every child is both a teacher and a learner, a person who gives support and receives it.

In another classroom that included a child with challenging disabilities, the classroom teacher was eager to encourage support for her without stigmatizing her further. Rather than listing only Arden's goals on the board for the class to see, she invited each student to write a weekly goal and paste it on his or her desk. Students were invited to set their own goals (finishing my math, not getting into fights at lunch, reading more) and to figure out ways of supporting one another. Rather than marginalizing Arden as the only one with an educational goal in the classroom, the only person who needed help, the structure encouraged all students to see themselves as having goals and as being capable of giving support (including Arden).

The opportunities to promote positive social interactions and support emerge constantly during any school day. Classroom jobs can be completed by pairs of students rather than by individuals, students requesting help can be directed to other students for that support, and students can be explicitly taught how to help others. ("Don't give people the answer—help them figure it out themselves. Here are some ways to teach that.")

Learning to give help and solve problems can even be an explicit part of the curriculum. In one school, teachers have taught students to implement a collaborative problem-solving method in which they learn to use brainstorming and problem-solving skills that stress flexible thinking and creativity. Because the school district is committed to full inclusion (students with disabilities are full members of regular classrooms), the teachers and students have used these problem-solving skills to figure out how to ensure that students with disabilities are fully integrated. Students have brainstormed, for example, how to involve a young girl with cerebral palsy in a puppet show activity, how to allow a boy with limited body movement to play a dart game, and how to support a little girl on the playground so that she could use the equipment like other students. Learning to support others and include them is operationalized in the school's curriculum.

Other schools have implemented conflict-resolution training for students so that they can acquire the skills necessary to resolve fights on the playground and in the classroom. One teacher has a conflict-resolution corner set up as one of the learning centers in the room. Students who are experiencing difficulties can select another student to serve as a mediator, and the three students follow a step-by-step model for resolving differences. Teachers can model for students a commitment to working things out together, to developing the skills necessary for the classroom to function as a community.

CONCLUSION

Communities don't just happen. No teacher, no matter how skilled or well intentioned, can enter a new classroom and announce, "We are a community." Communities are built over time, through shared experience, and by providing multiple opportunities for students to be themselves, know one another, and interact in positive and supportive ways. Community building must be seen and felt as a process that we're all in together rather than as a task that is important only to the teacher.

Although the teacher is but one person in the community, the teacher's behavior must provide a model of acceptance, support, and honesty for the entire class. It is unreasonable to expect students to be loving and supportive of one another if the teacher puts down individual students or uses labeling or name calling. If teachers are working in settings in which they do not feel valued and supported, it can be difficult for them to provide that kind of support for stu-

dents. If, as a teacher, you perceive a lack of community within the school or feel that teachers are not thought about or cared for, part of the task of community building for your *students* must include building a community for *yourself*.

It is essential to honor the fact that community building is neither automatic nor easy. Teachers must demonstrate a willingness to be honest with students about the conflicts that arise in forming and maintaining a community. Students may ask questions about issues related to other students: "Why does Michael go to the gifted program and not me?" or "Why doesn't Donnel talk?" Concerns and problems about working with others will be voiced as well: "Carolyn smells and I don't like to be around her"; "Shannon isn't doing her part when we work together." Some teachers feel that responding to such questions will make trouble or raise difficult issues. In reality, however, students are already aware of classmates' differences and differing needs, and failing to address such questions does not eliminate the concern; it simply drives it underground. The teacher must be willing to answer questions honestly and with integrity. The mystery of unexplained differences and the establishment of certain topics as classroom conversational taboos seriously impede the formation of a classroom community that feels safe for all students. In working toward the goal of an inclusive classroom community in which all children—regardless of race, disability, cultural or family background, or skill—are able to function as a cohesive group, teachers must engage students in forthright discussions of the joys and difficulties of building and maintaining a community. Such discussions may be hard and even painful, but the willingness to open up issues of exclusion, fairness, difference, prejudice, and discrimination, as well as the challenges of learning to work together can enrich the community as a whole and deepen teacher and student understanding of the many forces that keep people separate and isolated.

Taking on the task of building and maintaining a supportive classroom community can become a central organizing value. Teachers can examine every decision they make—about curriculum, about teaching, about grading, about management—and ask: How will this decision affect the classroom community? Will it bring students closer together, or will it push them further apart? Asking these questions and being willing to change our behavior can bring us closer to creating classroom communities in which all members—teachers and students—are nurtured.

CHAPTER 10

Harout and I: A Short Story for the Becoming Teacher

Artin Göncü

To Joe Becker with appreciation.

Harout was going to go back to "his" country after receiving his doctoral degree and become a proud leader in child development and education. That's what his people expected from him, what his country needed. Unfortunately, nothing happened as planned. When he graduated, going back was no longer an option. The political turmoil in his country had reached its peak. The government held the university responsible for the unrest; his most beloved friends and professors had been fired, jailed, tortured, or killed in "accidents." The government censored lecture notes and required permission to do research. There was no longer "free" teaching or learning. The surviving professors were leaving the university one by one.

The world of Harout shattered when he realized that he now had to live in a land where people made fun of his accented English, criticized him for his lengthy sentences, and shamed him for being too philosophical in his writings without any "empirical data."

He now felt the need to answer a host of overwhelming questions that he tried to avoid all along: Are there movie theaters in your country? Do people use silverware when they eat where you come from? Why do women cover themselves in your country? Which country is better, yours or ours? Where is your country? Come on, don't be such a "turkey," why don't you answer the questions?

He now had to get a job. Without any publications, he felt unprepared and inept in the face of fierce competition for academic