President Chen of National Taiwan University gave his speech to graduates in the
graduation ceremony this past June that he wished the graduates were less color
inclined as to blue or green politically and be more human inclined in caring and
empathy.

As high school educators, present and future, this presents a big challenge for us.
Being caring, compassionate and empathetic needs time to mature and grow. In other
word, these characteristics need to be planted, nurtured, and time to develop and
blossom. We have to change our students’ attitude, perception, and value at a younger
and more tender age so that they can grow to be more compassionate, empathetic,
tolerant and respectful toward others and people who are different from them. This is
certainly not an easy task.

Our society has been acting abnormally recently. Three men beat a woman in the
street in one of the cities in the Southern Taiwan and everybody stood there and
watched; no one came to help. All because this woman said something that those men
did not agree with. There are so many senior citizens who live alone under poverty
line. Their living quarters have no water and no electricity. The construction is very
old and ready to collapse at anytime. Crime rates escalate continuously. Kidnapping,
murders, street shooting between the policemen and gangsters happens everywhere
and all the times. Many people have taken their whole family to commit suicide with
them. All kinds of child abuses are in the newspaper everyday. A legislator called his
fellow woman legislator a prostitute in the legislation Hall and considered himself a
hero.

What have we done to our society and what kind of principles have we set up for
our youngsters? How can we teach our youngsters to be more respectful towards of
the people, nature, and laws and order while our society shows them a completely
different picture? How can we teach them to smell the flowers, enjoy nature, and be
happy with what they get in their hands while everyone is greedy and will do
anything just to get what she or he wants? What can we do to change our youngsters’
attitudes and values so that they can create a better and kinder society for themselves
and perhaps us as well? How can we open and expand their minds and hearts to be
more tolerant to “differences” and respect others’ opinions and positions? How can
we offer them a new insight to experience a wonderful and meaningful life to come?
What can we do, as educators, to find ways to cross those bridges over trouble waters
and educate a new generation to have a promising and bright future?