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ABSTRACT

This small book presents a collection of wisdom-based guidelines for teachers who are working in inclusive settings and is based on the authors' many years of experience as educators. The brief aphorisms are grouped under the following principles: (1) Effective Teachers Have Positive Expectations for Success; (2) Effective Teachers are Good Managers; (3) Effective Teachers Deliver Lessons that Support Student Learning; and (4) Teaching is Hard Work, Try To Make it Fun. (DB)

# Every Teacher's Little Book of Wisdom



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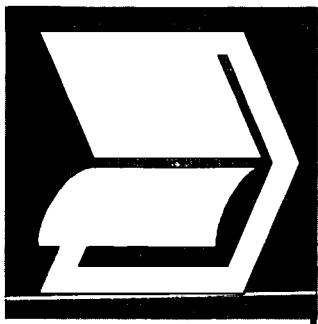
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## Ideas, Insights, and Inspirations

by Bob Algozzine and Kate Algozzine

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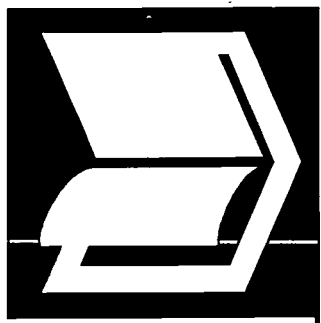
# ***Every Teacher's Little Book of Wisdom***

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***Ideas, Insights, and Inspirations***  
**by Bob Algozzine and Kate Algozzine**



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## Dedication

To our children and their children, some yet unborn.

## Introduction

I was doing inclusion before it was accepted as reform and innovation in special education. I was doing inclusion before it was invented as a way to restructure education to achieve better results for students with disabilities. I did inclusion without a thought to whether it was philosophically right or wrong. I did inclusion because it made sense to provide my students with educational experiences as much like those of their peers as possible. Simply, this meant spending as much time as possible with their natural neighbors and peers. End of story.

Today, inclusion and working in inclusive schools have come to be used to describe activities occurring within school settings where the prevailing philosophy reflects the belief that all children belong and can learn in the mainstream of education. When Kate and I started teaching, many moons ago, it never occurred to us that such a belief was novel, radical, or unusual. Of course the students in a special education class should experience the same things their neighbors and peers were experiencing in the "regular" classroom. How would they learn to live and work with them if they did not spend time with them? And, how would "regular"

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students learn about their special education peers if they never interacted with them in the natural environments of school?

We realize there are enormous obstacles to making inclusion work. Insufficient professional preparation, too little time, meager resources, too little support, and unacceptable class sizes are among the top reasons teachers offer for not accepting or doing inclusion. Clearly, this is a practice that is easy to avoid. The litany of reasons for not doing it goes far beyond preparation, time, resources, support, and enrollment inadequacies.

Kate and I have written this book because we have learned a great deal from spending our adult lives teaching. We like to think of this collective knowledge as wisdom. Much of it has general value for all teachers. Much of it has special value in teaching students with disabilities in inclusive settings. We hope some of it has personal value for you.

We collected the wisdom from many sources. Some of it is based on research, but we tried to disguise it and present it in a more interesting form. Some of it came from friends and strangers who provided "food for thought" to modify and present in a simple book like this. We are grateful to our professional colleagues for reaching the important practical research conclusions that could be converted to the wisdom passed along here. We also are thankful to

the many anonymous sources for their contributions to our work.

Nothing in this book is intended to change your life or make your job easier. Teaching is hard work; but, if something we have written encourages and makes you smile, makes you laugh, makes you think about your students in a positive way, or makes you trust your managing and teaching skills, Kate and I will be a little happier. Thanks for reading our book.

Bob Algozzine

## **I**nclusion Wisdom

Inclusion has many definitions, all of which share a common theme: Students with special needs receive as much of their education as possible in classrooms with their natural neighbors and peers. Wisdom has many definitions, all of which share a common theme: Common sense and good judgment based on learning, insight, and experience. Effectively teaching students with special needs in classrooms with their neighbors and peers requires many of the same skills required for teaching any students. Effective teaching is effective teaching and there are no boundaries on where it may occur, who may deliver it, and who may profit from it.



Much of what we know about effective teachers is grounded in wisdom passed down across the ages. For example, most professionals, parents, and educational partners agree that effective teachers have positive expectations for student success. Effective teachers are also thought to be good classroom managers; they organize students, space, time, and materials so that instruction can occur. Educators also agree that effective teachers know how to deliver instruction so that students master the content being presented. The wisdom in these three premises is universal and defies boundaries placed on programs by administrative convenience. Effective general and special education teachers hold positive expectations, are good classroom managers, and deliver lessons in ways that support student learning.

This book is a collection of wisdom-little instructions based on learning, insight, and experience presented in three areas related to effective teaching. Because teaching is hard work, the book ends with some thoughts that cross the rather arbitrary boundaries created by the earlier sections and provide general guidance, and perhaps some inspiration, for developing a wise outlook, plan, or course of action for your teaching in inclusive classrooms.

## Effective Teachers Have Positive Expectations For Success

*“Ah, Hope! what would life be, stripped of thy encouraging smiles, that teach us to look behind the dark clouds of to-day, for the golden beams that are to gild the morrow.” -Susanna Moodie*

- ❖ Every morning, say hello to every person you pass, especially every child.
- ❖ Look at your class as a collection of individuals with different needs, experiences, and goals.
- ❖ Cherish the uniqueness of every child.
- ❖ Challenge your students to solve their own problems.

- ❖ Ask your students how they would do things-this reveals a great deal about their thinking, interests, and desires.
- ❖ Help student to see that a bend in the road is not the end of the road unless you fail to make the turn.
- ❖ To boost students' self esteem help them set goal for things they can quickly improve, preferably behaviors that can be quantified.
- ❖ Push your students' "on" buttons, and remember...they are different for different students.
- ❖ Encourage your students to ask for what they want.
- ❖ Tell your students the truth.

- ❖ If they have an answering machine, surprise them with a nice message every now and then.
- ❖ Be certain your female students do not defer to your male students.
- ❖ Don't accept something because it's "always been done."
- ❖ Avoid sarcasm.
- ❖ If a student is negative, try to get him or her personally invested in what you're doing.
- ❖ Teach your students to walk and talk like winners.
- ❖ Teach your children to stop trying to get it just right.

- ❖ Being honest with your students is the best way to get results.
- ❖ Let them know you don't accept unacceptable behavior.
- ❖ Relabel: Instead of saying "I don't like that idea or I don't like that behavior" say "You need to go in another direction."
- ❖ Play no favorites.
- ❖ Encourage them to read more.
- ❖ Talk to your students for the purpose of gaining further insight into their lives and their behaviors.
- ❖ Always give the benefit of the doubt.

- ❖ Remember that "human" and "student" are not mutually exclusive terms.
- ❖ Don't condescend.
- ❖ Don't believe you always know what's best for your students.
- ❖ Constantly reflect on your class and have your students do the same.
- ❖ Do all you can to do right for your students.
- ❖ The classroom is your haven, but try to have your students make as many connections with the outside world as possible.
- ❖ Respect students' sense of powerlessness and help them see how much legitimate power they have in their lives.

- ❖ Let your students take a chance.
- ❖ Show students that the only deserts to worry about are the deserts of imagination.
- ❖ When playing games with your students, let them win more than once in a while-it is good for self-confidence, image, and attitude.
- ❖ Be positive-when they say it can't be done, say you think it can.
- ❖ Spend less time worrying about what is wrong and more time sharing what is right.
- ❖ Expect miracles and do your best to make one happen every day.
- ❖ Be thankful for all you have done.

- ❖ Praise freely.
- ❖ Keep their options open: Give grades for incomplete work and provide opportunities for completing it.
- ❖ Let students be smarter than you are-it is good for self-confidence, achievement, and image.
- ❖ Don't talk about students unless you have wonderful things to say.
- ❖ Value mastery by having many definitions for it.
- ❖ Hold high expectations for all students.
- ❖ Don't tempt students with your valuables, lock them in your desk or file cabinet.



- ❖ If you think you can or you think you can't, you are right.
- ❖ Make opportunities for your students to do what they do best.
- ❖ Let them know their opinions count.
- ❖ Don't talk about other teachers unless you have wonderful things to say.
- ❖ Keep their options open: Give grades for late work and provide opportunities for changing them.
- ❖ Try to attend their athletic events and recitals.
- ❖ Help your students make new friends.

- ❖ Let them win a few arguments-it's good for self-concepts, egos, and morale.
- ❖ Value perfection but be very happy with performance.
- ❖ Make a success a reality as well as a possibility.
- ❖ If they show a desire for something, support it if you can.
- ❖ Do something every day to foster good habits and health.
- ❖ Don't minimize students worries or fears.
- ❖ Speak positively about your students.
- ❖ Never laugh at a student's answer unless it was meant to be funny.

- ❖ Accept a breath mint if a student offers you one.
- ❖ When things are going well, notify your class.
- ❖ Send your students postcards if you make a special vacation trip.
- ❖ Show them the more respect they give, the more they will be given.
- ❖ Don't rain on their parades.
- ❖ Engage in random acts of niceness.
- ❖ Don't talk about parents unless you have wonderful things to say.
- ❖ Fill the room with student work-it is good for self-concepts, egos, and morale.

- ❖ Take pictures of your students and share them during the year.
- ❖ Remember, sometimes, not getting worse means getting better.
- ❖ End every day with a class compliment.
- ❖ Write your students thank you letters for great work, great behavior, a special smile, a helping hand, or "any old thing."
- ❖ Sometimes we never know our hidden sources of strength until we are treated like normal human beings.
- ❖ There is nothing wrong with specializing in fitting round pegs into square holes.

- ❖ Let your students hear this message often: I care about you and I want you to learn.
- ❖ Remember, hugs are a universal healer.
- ❖ Forgive quickly and remember better things.
- ❖ Say something positive to every student as early as possible every day.
- ❖ Remember, little things mean a lot.
- ❖ Speak gently, they have enough they must endure without the unkind word.
- ❖ When it comes to praise, give them all they need.

- ❖ Make "Daily Joke-Teller" one of your classroom helpers.
- ❖ Help them stand up for what is right, even if they may be standing alone.
- ❖ Help your students reject and condemn discrimination based on race, gender, religion, age, lifestyle, or disability.
- ❖ Teach them that very small differences sometimes separate "winners" from everybody else.
- ❖ Give them permission to make mistakes and help them to not make them again.
- ❖ Take some time each day to share something positive with each of your students.

- ❖ Teach them not to look down on a peer unless it is to help him or her up.
- ❖ Help them get over the loss every time they lose.
- ❖ Try not to always notice mistakes or seldom recognize success.
- ❖ Begin each day with a positive comment or story.
- ❖ Remember, the challenge of teaching is not holding good cards but in playing well those you are dealt.
- ❖ You probably won't change anybody's life by boosting a self-concept, but surely it can't hurt.
- ❖ Teach them to focus on dreams more than regrets.

- ❖ Do be a do bee; don't be a don't bee.

### **Effective Teachers Are Good Managers**

*“This world is run by people who know how to do things. They know how things work. They are equipped.” -Doris Lessing*

- ❖ In the absence of rules, make your own.
- ❖ Be fair, respectful and consistent.
- ❖ Don't be late.
- ❖ You are the classroom leader and yours will be the final word.



- ❖ If a colleague tells you "That's not the way we do things around here," modify your idea so it seems less threatening-or offer to try something both ways-the standard and the more experimental.
- ❖ Schedule uninterrupted time for working on the BIG picture.
- ❖ Keep supplies handy-it just makes projects go better.
- ❖ When presenting your goals to your mentor, pick something you know you can quickly improve, preferably a behavior that you can quantify.
- ❖ Don't forget your long-term goals as you take care of the daily basics-you must drain the swamp at the same time you're feeding the alligators.
- ❖ Your instincts are right, trust them!

- ❖ Make classroom rules clear and consistent.
- ❖ It's not a crime to steal a great idea from someone.
- ❖ There is such a thing as being too nice.
- ❖ Remember, what's done today won't have to be done tomorrow.
- ❖ The hours you clock in are no reflection of how good a job you've done.
- ❖ Delegate anything you can that doesn't necessitate your expertise and judgement.
- ❖ Ask: "Is this something someone else could do just as well"?

- ❖ Don't say, "I'm studying it." Say, "I'm working on it."
- ❖ Just do it!
- ❖ Use your time brilliantly.
- ❖ Banish the time intruders.
- ❖ When someone stops by your room, put a time frame around the encounter: "I have a meeting at 4:00 PM, but I can take ten minutes now."
- ❖ When you think a parent conference should end, get up gradually and ease your way to the door.

- ❖ When you think a meeting should end, don't add anything more to the conversation.
- ❖ Savor the moment, don't look as if time has gotten the best of you.
- ❖ Dare to take a short cut.
- ❖ If someone gives you a job that makes your stomach churn, say "no."
- ❖ Never say "maybe."
- ❖ Concentrate on the results you deliver.
- ❖ Be thoughtful, but don't be a pushover.

- ❖ Be fair; but ultimately, do what you want based on what you think is best.
- ❖ Don't always aim for consensus.
- ❖ Respect dissenting opinion, but acknowledge that your instincts are taking you in a different direction.
- ❖ Sound firm.
- ❖ Teach them to accept the consequences of their behavior.
- ❖ Don't allow disruptions.
- ❖ Give your principal loving nudges to remind him or her of your presence. Absence doesn't make the heart grow fonder.

- ❖ When talking with your principal, focus on your work, not you.
- ❖ It is a common misconception that you always make your problems better by talking about them.
- ❖ Let it go.
- ❖ Observe other teachers.
- ❖ Don't bite off more than you can chew.
- ❖ You choose to create the classroom you work in.
- ❖ Have each student spend some time working alone each day.
- ❖ Have each student spend some time working in a group each day.

- ❖ Be aware of what works.
- ❖ Change, if it is needed.
- ❖ Participate with your students in classroom activities.
- ❖ Save your strength and pace yourself.
- ❖ If you make mistakes, try not to make them again.
- ❖ Encourage your students to tell your principal how much they like being in your class.
- ❖ Dress for success and always be a role model.

- ❖ Treat your students with respect, courtesy, and fairness and expect the same from them.
- ❖ Listen to both sides of the story regardless of who is telling them.
- ❖ Don't be afraid to have parents visit your classroom.
- ❖ Keep a box of wet wipes handy.
- ❖ Spend time searching for solutions, not searching for blame.
- ❖ Listen to parents and other caregivers.
- ❖ Ask for help when you need it-nobody knows everything.
- ❖ Avoid living under faulty assumptions.



- ❖ Keep records of things that work.
- ❖ Try to deliver more than you promise.
- ❖ If you expect a "call" on something you have done, let the administrative team know the facts.
- ❖ Never act when you are angry.
- ❖ Be sure they have the materials and equipment they need to do their work right.
- ❖ Organize "free play" to avoid accidents.
- ❖ Don't be discouraged-less than 20 perfect games have been played in the history of baseball.

- ❖ Avoid the temptation to run their lives.
- ❖ Keep written records of accidents, incidents, and outbursts.
- ❖ Keep parents well-informed of accidents, incidents, and outbursts.
- ❖ Be sure you understand your role in implementing individualized education programs (IEPs) for your students with disabilities.
- ❖ If you suspect child abuse or serious problems at home, involve your principal and school services specialists.
- ❖ Call home to ask about a child who is not at school for two consecutive days.
- ❖ Keep your temper in check.

- ❖ Avoid using time or words carelessly.
- ❖ Rate the progress of your students by many standards.
- ❖ Be there when they need you.
- ❖ Try to do it right the first time, but if you don't, don't mess up again.
- ❖ Break up tedious tasks, like doing report cards or grading papers.
- ❖ Arrive at school on time (or a little early at least once a week).
- ❖ Don't park with your car facing out-it makes a bad impression on some people.
- ❖ Separate diversity from deviance; value diversity and adjust deviance.

- ❖ Prepare a schedule for conferences and encourage parents to stick to it and respect each others' time.
- ❖ Develop a knack for knowing when and a gift for knowing how.
- ❖ If you are worried about a conference, ask an administrator to sit in on it.
- ❖ Keep written records of all communication with and from parents.
- ❖ Ask this question often: Can I forgive myself if they leave me just the way I found them.
- ❖ Work with the students you have-parents are not keeping the better ones at home.

- ❖ If parents want to give you gifts, ask for books for their children to read.
- ❖ If you "find" some money, buy some books for your class.
- ❖ Avoid accepting assignments you can't finish.
- ❖ Innovate, the old way is not always the best way.
- ❖ Don't make promises you can't keep.
- ❖ Find a community improvement project for your class.
- ❖ Help your class complete a simple community improvement project (e.g., put a trash can in a park, organize a trash collection expedition in a park, donate books to a library).

- ❖ Invite visitors to share their joy of reading with your students.
- ❖ If you are trying to do everything right, stop-and start doing a few things really well.
- ❖ Set realistic goals but don't set them in cement.
- ❖ Always have backup activities ready.
- ❖ Remember, achievement is highly related to how much time students spend on a task.
- ❖ When you ask your principal for something and don't get it, let parents ask the next time, and let children ask the last time.
- ❖ Make ripples more than waves.

- ❖ Try to fix it long before it is broken.

### **Effective Teachers Deliver Lessons That Support Student Learning**

*“We never stop investigating. We are never satisfied that we know enough to get by. Every question we answer leads on to another question. This has become the greatest survival trick of our species.” -Desmond Morris*

- ❖ Answer all their questions.
- ❖ Always have something ready to do with your students if a lesson or activity doesn't work out.
- ❖ Present tight, short lessons with clear objectives and criteria for mastery.

- ❖ Distribute an outline of the key points of a lesson.
- ❖ Always review the key points to remember at the end of a lesson.
- ❖ Say it in a sound bite.
- ❖ When you're presenting a lesson, cut to the chase.
- ❖ Don't think difficult assignments will substitute for good lessons or persistent practice.
- ❖ Ask: Will this activity get students closer to their goal?
- ❖ Teach your students that if they cut their work into manageable pieces, that whole task will be easier-one step usually generates the next.



- ❖ Teach your students to use their time brilliantly.
- ❖ Teach your children not to take things personally.
- ❖ Teach them the more they know the less they will have to fear.
- ❖ To inspire devotion, you must give your students what they secretly want- your passion.
- ❖ Don't reveal everything-keep them curious.
- ❖ Watch a video of yourself teaching.
- ❖ Interact with colleagues who want to talk about the process of teaching.

- ❖ Interact with colleagues who are looking for better ways to reach students.
- ❖ Plan lessons you would find worthwhile as a student.
- ❖ Think about what techniques, projects, and bit of advice have been meaningful for you in your life and incorporate these into your teaching methods.
- ❖ Students need to experiment, hypothesize, succeed and fail through trial and error.
- ❖ Learn to be effective in what you say and write.
- ❖ Teach something that is not part of the curriculum.

- ❖ Encourage curiosity.
- ❖ If you let students correct their own work, be sure to verify their performance.
- ❖ Treat the staff in your school with respect and teach your students to do the same.
- ❖ Respect experience and be sure your students have some when they leave your class room.
- ❖ Use duplicated sheets, videos, and television judiciously.
- ❖ Remember, "I don't know" is not a sign of incompetence, it is an opportunity for learning.

- ❖ Value quality more than quantity.
- ❖ Teach them that if something sounds too good to be true-it probably is.
- ❖ Every day, look for small ways to improve your teaching.
- ❖ Ask for help whenever you need it.
- ❖ Don't be discouraged-less than 12 triple plays have been recorded in the history of professional baseball.
- ❖ Don't apologize for success, but don't flaunt it either.
- ❖ Pursue excellence not exception.

- ❖ Help your students satisfy existing curiosities and explore new ones.
- ❖ Don't worry if you are not the most popular person in your class-teaching means responsibility and other rewards.
- ❖ Every now and then, teach something that is above grade level.
- ❖ Teach them not to pretend to pay attention.
- ❖ Let them know there will probably not be a snow day on the day of a big test.
- ❖ Teach them not to regret yesterday or fear tomorrow.
- ❖ Teach them that little is accomplished with some risk.

- ❖ Be an original.
- ❖ Encourage your students to read what they like over and over again.
- ❖ Take some time to teach outside under a tree.
- ❖ Help your students see things that have not been and ask why not.
- ❖ Avoid maintaining an attitude of impenetrable mediocrity.
- ❖ Remember, nothing changes if nothing changes.
- ❖ Help students learn without fear, embarrassment, or anger.
- ❖ Help students learn with interest, joy, and happiness.

- ❖ Make your classroom a haven for taking risks.
- ❖ Always do better than you are given.
- ❖ Try not to trivialize the momentum or complicate the obvious.
- ❖ Try to change the sail, not change the wind or wait for it to change.
- ❖ Teach your students that success is no reason to quit.
- ❖ Make time every day to celebrate learning.
- ❖ Be sure all your students read something every day.
- ❖ Keep a notebook and pencil handy; ideas come at the strangest times.

- ❖ Remember that all the important truths are really quite simple.
- ❖ Avoid making assignments that they can't finish.
- ❖ Start the day by reading something thoughtful and inspiring.
- ❖ End the day by reading something thoughtful and inspiring.
- ❖ Celebrate learning.
- ❖ Have your students memorize at least one really good poem.
- ❖ It is not the best that we should all think alike, it is differences of opinion that make the world so interesting.



- ❖ Teach them to live with what they have and forgive what they have not.
- ❖ When you ask your students to do something, don't follow it with, "Okay?" Instead, ask if they understand, and then say, "Tell me what you are going to do."
- ❖ Teach them that waiting doesn't make difficult stuff easier to do.
- ❖ Teach them that what's right isn't always popular.
- ❖ Teach them that small deeds done are better than great deeds planned and undone.
- ❖ Monitor performance and progress-frequently and systematically.

- ❖ Always relate new content to subject matter that has already been taught.
- ❖ If students leave your room for special classes, take time to ensure that lessons in both classes are coordinated.
- ❖ Every class has a top, middle, and bottom-don't let this control how you teach.
- ❖ Don't miss the forest for the trees.
- ❖ Teach them that actions speak louder than words.
- ❖ Teach them that quality often comes in inexpensive packages but wears very well.

- ❖ Teach them that problems are opportunities for performance.
- ❖ Call on them often, especially if they are pretending to be taking notes.
- ❖ Some of them will be good at lots of things and some of them will be good at only a few-making all of them good at more is one of the best parts of teaching.
- ❖ Be careful not to wait for perfection when performance will do.
- ❖ Teach your children about their community, country, and history-from different perspectives.

## Teaching Is Hard Work, Try To Make It Fun

*“I was brought up to believe that the only thing worth doing was to add to the sum of accurate information in the world.” -Margaret Mead*

- ❖ As quickly as you can, become very familiar with your surroundings.
- ❖ Make friends with people who perform services you may need one day.
- ❖ Leave the building as soon as you can.
- ❖ Reach out for positive support.
- ❖ Love, time, and experiences are great to give every day.

- ❖ Enthusiasm is also great to share.
- ❖ Do only what is essential for your administrators, go over and above for your students.
- ❖ Find a hobby.
- ❖ Determine how weaknesses in the system can be transformed into opportunities.
- ❖ Encourage them to have a favorite story and read it often.
- ❖ Encourage imagination, too!
- ❖ Laugh.

- ❖ Real control means having the courage to let go of the belief that you have to do more and doing more is better.
- ❖ Remember, you can't please all of the people all of the time.
- ❖ Don't forget to ask for what you want, too.
- ❖ Remind yourself of your wisdom frequently.
- ❖ Listen to concerns and reservations, but if you're sure of what you're doing, don't let the sour pussies hamper you.
- ❖ Know when to let go.
- ❖ Walk and talk like a winner.

- ❖ Stop trying to do everything and concentrate only on the essential steps that will allow you to achieve your goal.
- ❖ Stop trying to cover the waterfront.
- ❖ Combat isolation with happy hours and talk sessions.
- ❖ Package each task so that it looks to your students like a wonderful opportunity.
- ❖ Create a little pocket of peace for yourself.
- ❖ Give yourself permission to play.
- ❖ When you're given bad news, get more information.

- ❖ When you're listening to criticism, play back what was just said.
- ❖ If you feel yourself getting emotional, leave the scene and come back when you're feeling less emotional.
- ❖ Give your students the sense that the best prize is being in your class.
- ❖ Keep in touch with your friends who aren't teachers.
- ❖ It's not impressive to be the last to leave at night.
- ❖ Write a thank you note to anyone who does you a favor, especially your students.
- ❖ Good friends and colleagues who share your beliefs about teaching and learning can make even the worst situations bearable.



- ❖ If you're unhappy, look at other schools.
- ❖ Create support systems for yourself.
- ❖ Focus on what you can do and have done to help your students, not what you have not done.
- ❖ Buy yourself a journal and record everything that goes well each day. Let yourself pour out what is burning you out.
- ❖ Go to an early movie with your colleagues.
- ❖ Form a teacher support group across disciplines.
- ❖ Your sense of guilt and failure are not unique to you.

- ❖ It's okay to need help and it's often right down the hall.
- ❖ Interact with colleagues who welcome the dilemmas and questions that are always going to be a part of our profession.
- ❖ Be open to new ideas.
- ❖ Find out which colleagues you can rely on for advice and friendship.
- ❖ Find out which colleagues you can't rely on for advice and friendship.
- ❖ Stay out of hassles with the administration.
- ❖ Be intellectual, curious, creative, and human.
- ❖ Lighten up.

- ❖ Enroll yourself in a class taking something in which you're not proficient.
- ❖ Your students will benefit by their sense of you as an adult living you life to the fullest.
- ❖ Catch the bouquets when they come.
- ❖ Look within yourself, question and reflect upon what you truly believe is important as an educator.
- ❖ Whatever you do, it must be done with sincerity.
- ❖ Put some money in a tax-sheltered annuity plan and contribute to it regularly.

- ❖ Share your successes and failures and learn from them.
- ❖ Keep a sense of humor.
- ❖ Avoid toxic people.
- ❖ Be thankful for all you do.
- ❖ Become an active member of professional organizations.
- ❖ Pat yourself on the back because you are special and willing to learn.
- ❖ Share your favorite stories with you students.
- ❖ Share your favorite cartoons with your students.

- ❖ Share your favorite songs with your students.
- ❖ Save an evening a week for your spouse or another close friend.
- ❖ Let them see you laugh a lot.
- ❖ Never give your principal a fruitcake.
- ❖ Teach them some happy songs.
- ❖ Keep a good balance between school life and personal life.
- ❖ Teach them some funny stories.
- ❖ Teach them a few good jokes.

- ❖ Let them know you like snow days as much as they do.
- ❖ Share a book with a friend (start with this one).
- ❖ Learn to smile at least once a day.
- ❖ Avoid the temptation to gossip at school.
- ❖ Speak positively about your school.
- ❖ Speak positively about your school district.
- ❖ Be careful in conversations that begin with, "Let me be perfectly honest."
- ❖ Make some time every day for students to talk to each other.

- ❖ Laugh with your students-it is good for self-concepts, egos, and morale.
- ❖ Don't be first or last at school all the time.
- ❖ End each day with a joke, a funny story, or a song.
- ❖ Be happy, you are part of something important.
- ❖ A case of beer and a bug zapper is not a good present for your principal.
- ❖ Plant some seasonal flowers around your school.
- ❖ Share your favorite song lyrics with your class.

- ❖ Remember that every child brings new opportunities.



## Prologue

*“Showing up at school already able to read is like showing up at the undertaker’s already embalmed: people start worrying about being put out of their jobs.”* -Florence King

Not much chance of being put out of work when you are a teacher. Today, it seems like schools are being asked to do more and more with less and less and the demand for teachers has never been higher. This means teaching is a secure, albeit undervalued job. The joy of teaching is not in what you make, but in sharing what you know, helping students to learn. We have a friend who often quips that “teaching would be a great job if it wasn’t for the students.” Teaching is a great job because of the students, regardless of how they come or what they bring to school.

People with disabilities are just like everybody else. They have dreams, goals, and aspirations just like their neighbors and peers. When they are children, they deserve the same educational experiences as their neighbors and peers: Good teachers who hold high expectations for success; good teachers who know how to manage classrooms to maximize learning opportunities for all students; and, good teachers who teach them to read, to do mathematics, or

to do anything else they need or want to learn. Nothing about having a disability limits an individual's desire to learn. Nothing about having a disability should limit the willingness of a teacher to teach. Good teaching is good teaching and there are no boundaries on where it can occur and who will profit from it. We believe this and try to make it happen whenever we teach. Now it is up to you.

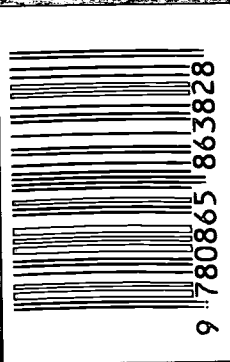
Thanks again for reading our book. We hope you found something in it helpful in your efforts to provide inclusive educational experiences. If you want more information about including students with disabilities or any other aspects of teaching exceptional children, contact:

Council for Exceptional Children  
1110 North Glebe Road  
Suite 300  
Arlington, VA 22201

1-800-224-6830  
703-620-3660  
1-800-915-5000 (TTY)  
703-620-2521 (FAX)  
[[www.cec.sped.org](http://www.cec.sped.org)]



Council for  
Exceptional  
Children



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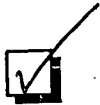


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