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Remember The Value You Bring to Young People

Educating young people can be challenging, yet extremely rewarding. Take advantage of the opportunity to make a real and measurable impact on young people's lives. Educators touch the future every day by guiding generations of youth to lead successful lives.

Ponder the following quotes.

Education is not the filling of a pail but the lighting of a fire.

- William Butler Yeats

*Students don't care how much you know until they know
how much you care.* - Anonymous

*There is an important difference between saying "I teach science
to students" and "I teach students science." - RP Bowman*

*Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to
change the world.* - Nelson Mandela

*Educators touch the future every day by guiding generations of
young people to lead successful lives.* - Source Unknown

*It's not what is poured into their heads, it's what's planted
that ultimately counts.* - Source Unknown



Discussion Questions



Which of these quotes do you like best? Why? What is another similar quote you remember?

Why and when is it important to pause and remember the deepest value of what you are doing in your job?

What do you believe is the most important impact an educator can have on young people?

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Strive for Balance and Work - Life Integration

Remember that work and life coexist. Wellness at work follows you home and vice versa. - Melissa Steginus

Recent research has changed terminology multiple times from work-life balance to work-life harmony to work-life integration. When the term work-life integration is used, it feels like less of a conflict with our work life and our personal life. Why should our work life and our personal life conflict, especially when both align with our values and beliefs? Many of us are pursuing our purpose each day and answering our call as professional educators.

Perhaps the goal is to integrate our purpose into both our work life and our personal life. This integration is possible when we develop the emotional intelligence to know when we need to put boundaries in place and/or take time to practice self-care and self-preservation.

This level of emotional intelligence begins with our own self-awareness and recognizing how integrated and balanced our physical, mental, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual wellness are. Once we recognize, name and act on our needs, we will be more balanced and live a life of work-life integration.



Discussion Questions



When you think about your role as a professional educator, are there times where you are more balanced? What are those times?

When are there times throughout the school year where you struggle to maintain balance?

What is one thing you can do to combat this balance and achieve work-life integration? Who can support you in this?

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Be Aware That All Behavior is Communication

I never listen to what a person says. I look at what a person does because what they do tells me who they really are. - Patty Houser

Our students communicate through their behavior. If a student is angry with a grade, calls out during a lesson or cannot keep their hands to themselves; what are they trying to communicate? As educators, we often take behavior at face value and do not look deeper into what the behavior is communicating and what it means.

When we take the time to look deeper at a student's behavior patterns, we might gain some fresh perspective that will help us to be more effective in reaching and teaching that young person.

Think of misbehavior as being purposeful. Difficult behaviors are usually the student's attempts to gain attention, power, revenge or a perception of inadequacy. Determine which of these goals the student is trying to achieve. With this understanding of the student's deeper motives you can plan more calm and collected responses that can have a longer-term impact.



Discussion Questions



Are there student behaviors you've noticed that might warrant a deeper look? What are they?

What is an example of a student who you discovered had surprising reasons behind his or her misbehavior?

What is an example you've experienced in which a student was chronically attempting to achieve one of these four goals of misbehavior?

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Build Rapport

Connection before content. No significant learning occurs without significant relationships. - James Comer

Student-staff relationships are the foundation on which all learning takes place. Students are more primed to learn when they believe that their school staff value and appreciate all that they bring to the learning experience. Building positive relationships with students begins from the moment they enter the bus, school or classroom. A high-five, fist bump, or handshake at the doorway while being called by name can go a long way to help set a positive learning readiness.

When we lead and support so many students, it can be difficult to get to know them at a personal level, but this can happen when we are intentional.

- ▶ Begin each class with a sharing or restorative circle space allowing students to share their stories with the class.
- ▶ Call home when there are positive messages to share with families.
- ▶ Go on home visits.
- ▶ Regularly have lunch with several students.
- ▶ Use journaling time to learn about students.
- ▶ Allow students to have voice and choice in the structure of the classroom day.

What is one new thing that you can try to further build relationships with your students?

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