Facilitator/Book Study Guide
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About the Authors

Rick Smith

Rick Smith is an award-winning teacher, education consultant, and international presenter. He has shared practical teaching strategies to more than a hundred thousand teachers and teacher-trainers in more than forty U.S. states and fourteen countries, including two years’ training American Peace Corps Volunteer Teachers in Ghana, West Africa. A classroom teacher for more than fourteen years, Rick focused primarily on students-at-risk. He’s been a mentor teacher and mentor coordinator for many years, and has taught in both Elementary and Secondary Credential programs in northern California.

Attendees of Rick’s more than one thousand keynotes and workshops consistently praise his sense of humor, his attention to the details of teaching, and the compassion and deep love he holds for teachers and students. These qualities are evident in the numerous articles he has published in education journals — including “Mentoring New Teachers: Strategies, Structures, and Successes,” in *Teacher Education Quarterly*, and “Assume the Best” in ASCD’s *Classroom Leadership*.

Rick’s goal is to bring out the best in students and teachers by offering nurturing ways to discover both fun and challenge in education, and by giving teachers tools for surfing the challenging waves of the classroom experience.

Grace Dearborn

Grace Dearborn’s warm, funny, and engaging style has earned her international recognition as a workshop presenter, instructional coach, and consultant to K-12 schools and districts. Her goal is to help teachers improve their craft through reflecting on what they do, how they do it, and who they are. In this way, her trainings and mentoring are both practical and inspirational, leaving a positive emotional footprint on the teachers with whom she works.

Grace taught at multiple grade levels for more than a decade in the San Francisco Bay Area, and authored curriculum for both elementary and secondary schools. Her year-long literacy intervention social studies course for incoming ninth graders in an urban, low-performing high school in Oakland, California, resulted in a dramatic increase in the school’s state test scores over the three years that followed.

In the twenty-plus years that Grace has worked in education, she also has held positions as a New Teacher Support Coordinator, Professional Development Director, Literacy Coach, Curriculum Specialist, and Mentor Teacher. Her skill at managing young and adolescent learners is daily put to its truest test, however, by her two sons, Mason and Owen.
Introduction

This guide is designed as a companion for *Conscious Classroom Management: Unlocking the Secrets of Great Teaching, 2nd edition*. The book is packed with specific, research-supported suggestions and practical advice for effectively managing a classroom. It transforms the “invisible” art of classroom control into tangible tools that any teacher can begin to use immediately with very “visible” results.

The guide is intended for use in several contexts:

♦ beginning teachers working in an induction program
♦ all teachers through school or district workshops
♦ teaching credential candidates in colleges and universities
♦ mentors who are training to work with classroom teachers

The guide may be used by individual teachers working on their own or by facilitators working with groups of educators. It is particularly useful to incorporate this work in a peer coaching/observation format in which teachers can work closely with a trusted mentor or peer. While we use the term “study session” to describe the format used to explore the book’s ideas, you can easily substitute “workshop” or “professional development plan.” While we will refer to the work of “teachers,” you can substitute “credential candidates” or “mentors.”

Each study session begins with a summary of the material covered and presents pre-reading questions to focus the topic for study. After you have read the chapter, the guide will lead you through both discussion questions and specific skill-building activities aimed at clarifying the concepts in the chapter. Some of these discussions and activities are designed to be done by a group of teachers working together, while others are designed to be done by individuals in their classrooms.

Since teachers’ feelings and assumptions about teaching and their students are often the determining force behind classroom practices, we also include opportunities for journal writes and self-reflection. A list of “key points to remember” and a suggested action plan end each study session so that teachers can go from theory to practice, and prepare for the next session.
There is no need to approach the study sessions chronologically if you feel it would better suit your needs to skip one or jump ahead to another. Our one suggestion would be to avoid the temptation to dive right into consequences outlined in the last session, “Intervention – What We Do in Response,” before establishing the foundation – both philosophical and practical – outlined in the opening chapters. On the other hand, if you are pressed for time or are about to start the school year, you may want to review Sessions 10: “Getting Ready” and 11: “The First Week of School” before returning to the others.

One last thing: This facilitator’s guide is a “living document.” It has been put together in part with suggestions from mentor teachers and professors from around the country. If you have a suggestion that you’d like to share, please email us, and we will gladly update the guide with your idea.
<mail@consciousteaching.com>
Two ways to initially get teachers into the book

Idea #1:
Give out the books. Divide the group into pairs. Each pair will be responsible for one (or more) of the questions below. After introductions, teachers search the book to find the answers. They then report out to the group as a whole.

1. What are examples of some characteristics of an effective “No” response to students?
2. What is the book’s advice about something we can all do for five minutes each day to reduce stress?
3. What are some examples of non-verbal reminders about rules and consequences?
4. Why can classroom management be especially difficult for Physical Education teachers?
5. What is the difference between appreciation and praise? What is the effect of each?
6. What is the difference between being nice and being kind? What are the consequences of each?
7. What is “supplemental lesson ideas,” and why and when do we need it?
8. What are two good get-acquainted activities to use at the start of the school year?
9. What is the single biggest source of teacher stress? How can we counteract it?
10. How and when might you use a behavior contract with an individual student?
11. What is inner apology and why can it be so counterproductive in the classroom?
12. Explain the “firm and soft” paradox.
13. What is the “4-H strategy” for making positive connections with your students? What would it look like in your classroom?
14. Why is it important to establish classroom procedures before content is taught? What are some examples of important procedures that need to be explicitly taught?
15. What is “arguing with the ref” and what is a good way to deal with it?
16. What is one of the very hardest things for teachers to enforce consistently in the classroom, and why is it so important to do so?
17. What is an effective way to keep students on track if they have been absent from school?
18. What are the five key assumptions we need to make about consequences for misbehavior?
19. What are ways to use music or sound signals to aid in transitions?
20. How can students be involved in making the class rules?
Idea #2

Give out the books. Provide time for participants to silently browse through the book. Afterward, they can pair off and each share one or two quotations that stood out. Some of these can be shared with the group.

Tell the group that in their workshops Rick and Grace asks that teachers do not take the book back to their schools and make it part of their professional library. Instead, they suggest, “Take it home and put it in your bathroom. That’s how it was designed. Go to the bathroom. Leave… with a strategy.”
Session One/Two:
Introduction and Assume the Best

Reading
Introduction and Chapter Two (pages 2-25)

Focus of Chapter
Effective teachers often internalize certain key, positive assumptions about their students and themselves, to the point where they may not be aware of what those assumptions are. In this chapter we unearth, identify, and focus on these assumptions, because they form the foundation of our teaching experience and frame the actions we take. When we start to assume the best about our students and ourselves, teaching changes and magic happens.

Pre-Reading Prompts
1. Think of effective teachers you have had in the past or that you have observed. What made them particularly successful in generating a positive learning environment? (You may want to address the same question about memorably ineffective teachers you have encountered.)
2. What are your underlying assumptions about your most difficult students’ attitudes about learning and about school?

Post-Reading Discussion & Reflection Questions
1. What are key assumptions that help us successfully manage our classrooms?
2. Reflect on this quote from the introduction “The combination of who we are and what we do makes for effective classroom management.” How does this apply to you in your classroom?
3. Did the description of Mrs. Allgood remind you of any teachers you have had in the past or have observed? Did her responses seem realistic? Do-able?
4. Does Mrs. Meanswell remind you of teachers you have known? Have you observed her? Been her? Did her responses make you squirm at any point?
5. Describe a “Brad” from your own experience? How did you respond to him? What worked and what did not work?
6. Did you ever have a student who drove you so nuts that you started to assume that he/she was out to thwart you? How did that assumption affect your connection with that student?
7. How would you describe the culture of your school in terms of teacher attitudes about teaching and about their students?

Activities & Actionables

1. **Student Sort:** Write down – from memory - the names of the students in one of your classes. Then check your class list to see if you have forgotten anyone. Next, write the name of each student on a 3x5 card and sort the cards into whatever categories seem appropriate to you. The simple act of sorting can illuminate certain of your underlying teacher values. Did you sort by ability – and if so, what sort of ability – athletic, musical, academic? Did you sort by personality? Maturity? Economic background? Sense of humor? Attitude about learning? Once you have done your first sort, try another.

2. Choose a student in your class who chronically misbehaves. **Write a letter** to that student (you will not be actually sending it) that interprets his or her behavior as a call for help, as opposed to an attempt to get you off track. Then give this student extra attention or care to in the next couple weeks.

3. **Observe a teacher you admire** and find at least three things to appreciate about his or her classroom management. Write a note, thanking him or her.

4. **Review the “Article and Group Activity: Student Subtitles” in the online toolbox.** Complete the activity and discuss as a staff how to implement the technique of reading and responding to student subtitles in the coming week.

5. **Complete the “Assuming the Best Self Reflection Rubric” in the online toolbox** and discuss with a partner or group.

Key Points to Remember

- Effective classroom management is essentially invisible.
- Assume the best about your students.
- Teachers must teach procedures and behavior.
- Students want to learn and they want to behave.
Session Three:  
Inner Authority

Reading  
Chapter Three (pages 26 - 37)

Focus of Chapter  
Teachers are the primary authors of what happens in the classroom. For our visions to come to life — for our classroom environments to be smooth and harmonious — we must marshal our inner resources and write our own “scripts.” In this chapter we explore how to develop our “inner authority,” which can make all the difference in being an effective teacher. Inner authority doesn’t involve holding our breath or gearing up for battle or carrying ourselves in an aggressive way. It is a relaxed, natural state that permeates everything we do, in the classroom and elsewhere.

Pre-Reading Prompts  
1. Think about the ways in which you direct activities and give directions in your classroom. Are you confident? How do you (or could you) convey confidence both verbally and non-verbally?  
2. Do you have difficulty apologizing when you have made a mistake? How do you approach this in your classroom?  
3. Do you worry about what others, especially your students, think of you?

Post-Reading Discussion & Reflection Questions  
1. What is “inner authority”? How can you grow in “inner authority”?  
2. Re-read pages 31 – 33. Discuss the difference in the two approaches outlined. How would you describe the difference between “self-effacing” and “self-affirming,” between “deflecting the heat” and taking the heat”?  
3. Brainstorm ways in which being consistent and being prepared can help you build your inner authority. Be as specific as you can. What would this look like in your classroom? What would it sound like? Most importantly, what would it feel like?
4. The end of this chapter suggests that trying to develop our inner authority can be a “trial by fire,” a steep learning curve. How true is that for you? What next steps do you want to take?

5. Are the ideas in this chapter applicable to other areas of your life as well? Where have you seen yourself or others being inwardly apologetic? Where have you experienced inner authority?

Activities & Actionables

1. **Role-play with a peer or alone in front of a mirror.** Play the role of the teacher and ask your partner, playing the role of your student, to “please put that away and have a seat.” Try saying this statement from a number of different contexts – as a whisper; from across the room; from inner apology; from standing; from sitting; while walking toward the student; while walking away; in a brisk accusatory tone; in a self-effacing tone; from inner authority. As you try the different contexts, assess where you are on the continuum of inner apology/inner authority. Reflect on what contexts are most comfortable for you and most challenging. Hint: If you want to practice speaking from inner authority, as you speak to your partner, assume that he/she absolutely wants and needs to hear what it is that you are saying.

   VARIATION: This role-play can be done with any classroom direction or discussion that you would like to practice giving. Perhaps, for example, your student earned a low grade, and you anticipate that he will want to complain about it and blame you. How will you respond? Or you could also practice a challenging conversation with a parent, administrator or fellow teacher.

2. **Give your class an evaluation form** in which your students have the opportunity to anonymously assess your abilities as a teacher. After reading them, consider the following: What did you learn from this? Are you surprised by any responses? What value is there in periodically giving students this opportunity? Can this help you grow in inner authority?

3. **Call five parents** to discuss their child’s behavior in your classroom. Make sure that at least some of your calls address positive student behavior. Facing parents in this manner is a “two-for-one special.” It can help us grow in inner authority while helping improve student behavior in the meantime.
4. **Make a list of statements** you make on a regular basis in your classroom that tend to bring you into inner apology. Do the same with statements that tend to bring you into inner authority. Examine the differences in each category. What can you do, in terms of preparation or anticipation, to help you come more from inner authority in the areas where you most struggle?

**Key Points to Remember**

- Our inner authority affects how we give directions and talk one-on-one with students.
- Inner apology can be counterproductive in the classroom and preys on our insecurities.
- Apologies to the class that are grounded, sincere and affirming of the teacher’s caring reflects a teacher’s inner authority.
- Approaches that work include assuming the best, asking for help, holding our ground, and being consistent and prepared.
Session Four: 
Ask for Help

Reading
Chapter Four (pages 38 -47)

Focus of Chapter
All teachers make mistakes, and denying this not only sets impossible standards for ourselves but also leads our students to think we expect them to be perfect. Our openness is the key to letting go of seeking unattainable perfection. It is the single-most important quality for any teacher; it lets our students know that it’s okay to take risks, explore, and make mistakes in the classroom. In this chapter we will learn how to reach out for the help we need. In asking and receiving that help, we will ultimately feel more confident, less isolated, our inner authority will grow, and we will become role-models for our students, who are often reluctant themselves to ask for help. Those who help us will also benefit, creating a win-win situation.

Pre-Reading Prompts
1. What are the most important qualities of any teacher?
2. In what areas would you like to get assistance or work together with someone else?
3. What is the atmosphere about collegiality and collaboration at your school? In your district? Are there ways you would like to improve this atmosphere?
4. How does it feel to ask for help? Share stories – the good and the not-so-good.

Post-Reading Discussion & Reflection Questions
1. Combine the lists you and your colleagues have made of the qualities of a good teacher (see “Pre-Reading Prompt #1 above). What other qualities would you add after having read this chapter?
2. Reread or review Rick’s story of his “bumpy start” (pages 42 -43), take a breath, and then share your own stories.
3. Reflect on this passage from the chapter (p. 44): “Those who give us help blossom even more than we do.” In what respects has this been true in your experience?
4. What are some assignments and activities that you have the students do that require or encourage them to ask for help (cooperative learning groups, for example)? What are some ways you could restructure some of your assignments or activities to more allow students to practice asking for help?

**Activities & Actionables**

1. **Make a list of the sources of help** for teachers within your school and in your larger community. Include everything from the names of teachers who can serve as models, to community drug and alcohol agencies and parent volunteers. If you are new to teaching or to your school, this is a great time to ask your mentor or colleagues for suggestions.

2. **Make an appointment with your mentor or a trusted colleague** to discuss your evaluation and/or your goals for professional development this year.

3. **Decide on a method of documenting potentially controversial decisions, conversations and actions** that will potentially work well for you. Implement that system for a week or two and then talk with your colleagues about what you like and don't like about it. Discuss revisions and improvements.

**Key Points to Remember**

- Ask for help!
- Openness is the most important quality in any teacher.
- Share your evaluations with trusted teachers.
- Document everything.
- Give students a chance to ask for help as well.
Session Five: Got Stress?

Reading
Chapter Five (pages 48 - 63)

Focus of Chapter
However proficient we are, however prepared, positive, effective, and resilient, we are going to spend some up-close and personal time experiencing stress. How we address this can make a big difference in our overall outlooks, attitudes, and successes as teachers — and as people. In this chapter we explore the causes of teacher stress and some possible antidotes. Regardless of our level of teaching experience, there are always opportunities to slow down, exhale, and renew our enthusiasm for teaching.

Focus of this Session
♦ What causes us stress? How do we best address it?
♦ How can we care for ourselves as in our best moments, we care for our students?

Pre-Reading Prompts
1. What is the biggest cause of teacher stress in your experience?
2. What works best for you as a means of countering this stress?

Post-Reading Discussion & Reflection Questions
1. What are some specific, practical ways to reduce the stress of our jobs?
2. What hints can you share about dealing with the paperwork that can threaten to overwhelm us?
3. Respond to the following quotation (p. 55) “sometime during the day, take five minutes of unstructured time for yourself. Disengage from the job description and remember yourself.” Does this seem valuable to you? Possible? How and when might you do this?
4. Could the staff at your school have more good, old-fashioned fun? What would be a good first step?
Activities & Actionables

1. **Make a list of the sources of stress** in your life, both personal and professional. Then look at each item on your list, and determine how much control you have over it. Put your active focus on those sources of stress that you have the most influence over. Make an action plan to address each doable item, and practice “letting go of complaint” with those items you can’t change. Focus on one step at a time with celebrations and self-appreciations built in. Please don’t make releasing stress into a stressful job!

2. Make an appointment with another teacher to **spend 15 minutes or more walking** (at lunch, on your prep, or after school) away from or around the school – and agree that you will not talk about school or your students. Try this for a few days in a single week.

3. **Review the “Time Saving Tips for Grading”** in the online toolbox. Discuss with a partner or group which of these you could reasonably adopt and apply or what other ideas you have for saving time when grading.

4. **Photocopy the “Wise-Apple Advice” on page 63** and place it in a conspicuous place in your classroom. Or, place an inspirational photograph, image, quotation, or object on your desk or back wall in your classroom. When things get rough, gaze on your inspirational image for support. Or, **pick a song that fills you with strength** and hum it to yourself before starting a difficult lesson or speaking to a difficult class. One teacher hums “Darth Vader’s Theme” on her way to work with her most difficult class.

Key Points to Remember

- Choose enthusiasm over burn-out.
- Address the causes of stress and possible antidotes.
- We need to care for ourselves as well as our students.
- Welcome feelings of incompletion and inadequacy that inevitably come with this profession, but don’t listen *too* closely!
Session Six:
Holding Our Ground

Reading
Chapter Six (pages 66 - 77)

Focus of Chapter
Holding our ground is challenging, regardless of the system of rules and consequences we have, regardless of the grades we teach, and regardless of the abilities or attitudes of our students. In this chapter we explore the many interacting aspects of this invisible quality, this willingness to be firm without being mean, which spills into everything we do as teachers. It will influence the way we enforce consequences, impart information, describe procedures, talk with students about their lives, walk down the hall, and even how we feel about ourselves and our jobs.

Pre-Reading Prompts
1. Think of a time when you were particularly angry at a student. How did you respond? What was effective in this situation? What could have worked better?
2. How do you feel when you have to say “no” to a student? How do you feel about how you feel?
3. How has anger caused you to lose ground, both in and out of the classroom?

Post-Reading Discussion & Reflection Questions
1. Think of times you have seen a teacher respond effectively to a disruptive student. What did he or she do that worked best? How can we work to make these seemingly intuitive responses more tangible?
2. Have you witnessed a time when a teacher has won the battle with a student, but then found him or herself “in a land of battles”? (p. 74) How might this be avoided?
3. What is the line between anger and reactivity? Is there ever a role for the expression of anger within the classroom?
4. What are some of the strategies that will help dissipate anger or help us respond effectively when we are angry?
5. What specific practices from this chapter can you take back to try with your students?

**Activities & Actionables**

1. **Role-Play Saying “No”:** Find a partner and have each of you in turn play the part of an insistent student asking to leave the classroom. The teacher’s job is to not allow the student to leave, no matter what. After a minute, continue the role play, but this time with the teacher limited to only two responses: “No” and “I understand and the answer is No.” After each person has had a turn, discuss what this felt like and identify several successful approaches that you might use in your classroom. **NOTE:** Sometimes students benefit from an alternative to simply being told “no.” Role-play situations where this might be the best strategy.

   VARIATION: As the teacher, **repeat what the student says**, without giving in. For example, the student says: “You’re not fair! You never listen to what I say!” and the teacher calmly responds with “I see that you’re saying that I’m not fair and that I never listen to what you say.”

2. **Observe a teacher you admire** and find at least one time when he or she succeeded in “holding the line” with grace, dignity and love. Write a note, thanking him or her.

3. In the next week, **actively practice being both firm and soft in saying “no”** without explanation, blame, complaining or wiggle-room.

**Key Points to Remember**

- Don’t over-explain.
- Get conflict off center stage.
- Lower your voice.
- Lower your tone.
- Directly face student.
- Realize anger is a feeling but reactivity is a choice.
- Breathe!
Session Seven:
Positive Connections

Reading
Chapter Seven (pages 78 - 101)

Focus of Chapter
Extensive research underscores how the teacher-student relationship impacts student learning and satisfaction. How students feel about their learning environment and their teacher has a huge effect on how much attention and effort they expend in the classroom. In this chapter we aim to break the seemingly intuitive art of connecting positively with students into visible, replicable pieces. Sometimes this means doing what’s best for our students, as opposed to what’s easiest.

Pre-Reading Prompts
1. What are some things you have tried to create positive connections with students or classes who were initially challenging for you? What worked?
2. Describe a time when you or a teacher you know became overly friendly (for example, shared too much personal information or shared personal information too often, or made decisions based on wanting to be liked or avoiding conflict rather than on what was in the best interest of students), and what the result was in the learning environment.

Post-Reading Discussion & Reflection Questions
1. What is the difference between being “nice” and being “kind”?
2. Can teachers try too hard to be “pals” with students? What would this look like in the classroom? How do you find the right balance?
3. What are appropriate ways in which your caring can be expressed in the classroom? What are inappropriate ways? What evidence will the students provide (if any) that you are positively connecting to them in appropriate ways?
4. What are some specific small steps you can take to give your students more choices and greater autonomy?
5. What are some specific strategies you can use to make positive connections with your students?

6. Using the diagram on page 91, brainstorm specific ways that we balance personal connections with a willingness to hold our own ground.

**Activities & Actionables**

1. **Make a graphic organizer or poster** which illustrates some of the specific suggestions offered on pages 83 – 87 in this chapter. What would your classroom look like and sound like if you incorporated these ideas? Discuss which two or three specific strategies you will try.

2. **Make a commitment to call five or more parents** per week for three weeks. Focus your calls on positive things their child has done recently in your class.

3. **Choose two specific students** with whom you would like to forge a more positive personal connection. Decide on one or two techniques from this chapter that you can try with each and try them for a week or two.

4. For one week, **greet your students at the door** when they enter the classroom and require each of them to say hello, give you a high five or shake your hand (their choice) while making eye-contact as they enter. If you teach middle or high school choose just your toughest period/class to try this with. Check in with them at the end of the week and get their feedback on how it made them feel or what they liked or didn't like about it.

5. **Review the 4 resources in the online toolbox** for this chapter. Share with a colleague one strategy or idea you learned from them that you want to apply.

**Key Points to Remember**

- Choose being kind over being nice.
- 2 minutes a day of personal connection can have a huge impact.
- Share about yourself and your life, but not too much or too often.
- Make positive phone calls home weekly.
- Provide choices, whenever appropriate.
- It’s okay not be liked sometimes.
Session Eight:
Teaching Procedures

Reading
Chapter Eight (pages 102 - 129)

Focus of Chapter
Procedures, far from being “busy work” or a distraction from teaching content, are the railroad tracks that make it possible for our train of content to run quickly and smoothly to its destination—learning. Spending time on procedures in the classroom not only makes the environment more safe and structured, but also actually facilitates teaching content. In this chapter we will focus on a broad range of classroom procedures — how each can be effectively taught, reinforced, practiced, and reviewed throughout the school year.

Pre-Reading Prompts
1. What procedures do your students have trouble with? Or what things routinely do not go the way you want in your classroom?
2. Which procedures do students seem to have the easiest time following correctly? Why do you think these procedures are easiest for them?
3. How effective is group work in your class? Describe your ideal vision of how your students could work in groups.
4. How do you know if students have understood your directions? What different ways have you tried for checking for student understanding? Which were most effective? Least effective?

Post-Reading Discussion & Reflection Questions
1. Describe the beginning of a typical class in your room? How might this time be used more effectively? How might you teach the start-of-class procedures that you want?
2. How well do your students work in small groups? What works well and what does not? How might you teach the procedures you want to see?
3. What is your policy about tardies? Clean up? Bathroom use? Tattling? Pencil sharpening? What works well and what does not? How might you teach the procedures you want to see?
4. What behaviors are creating problems with cooperative groups in your classroom? What procedures would alleviate those problems?
5. How do you get the attention of everyone in your class? What has worked to help students make efficient transitions from one activity to another?
6. What are some ways to hold students accountable for following directions and learning procedures? What are some natural incentives?
7. How can you translate your verbal directions into visual or kinesthetic directions?

Activities & Actionables

1. There are sixty-three procedures listed on pages 105-107 under the heading “What Procedures Do We Need?” Choose two procedures from the list that you wish went more smoothly or efficiently in your classroom. Using the “Outline for Creating Procedural Lesson Plans” in the online toolbox, rough out lesson plans for re-teaching and reinforcing each of these procedures to get what you want from your students. Review the Sample Lesson Plans in the online toolbox for ideas.

2. Decide on three different ways you can check for student comprehension of the directions you have given before your students begin an assignment. See the “Article: Checking for Understanding Techniques” in the online toolbox for examples. Try each one out at different times in your classroom for a few days and assess which was most effective or useful.

3. Write down the top 5 things you find yourself repeating over and over while your students are engaged in seat-work (independently, in pairs, or in groups) and you are circulating around the room. For example, "lower your voice" and "put that away" are commonly used phrases. Create a set of visuals to represent each of these things. For example, you might have a visual of a finger in front of lips to represent "stop talking." Put your 5 visuals on a key ring OR on your lanyard OR on a clip-board OR on an iPad. Next time you are circulating among your students, carry the visuals with you and use them, instead of your voice, to convey to individual students what you need them to do.

4. Create a procedural rubric to try in your classroom that might help your students better follow a key procedure. This might be, for example, a rubric
for volume, dismissal, lining up, dress code, PE uniforms, hallway behavior, table cleanliness, or readiness to learn. Create five large visuals (8.5 x 11 or larger) that you can use to reinforce the procedure with your students. Consider using your students as models for the visuals. OR you can use your colleagues, your friends, or your family. Or you can use clip art or drawings. Bring the images in and use them to re-teach and reinforce how you want the procedure to be followed.

5. **Videotape your students** the next time you ask them to do a procedure that they don’t normally do well, such as getting started at the beginning of class, packing up for dismissal, or transitioning into groups (or from one area to another) in the classroom. The next day, show them the video and have them assess how well they did at what you asked and/or what they could do better/differently. Model what you want it to look like and have them practice until they are “video” ready. See “Video: Group Procedure” in the online toolbox as a sample.

6. **Review your room arrangement** and make changes to it that will make it easier for you to either circulate within 3 feet of each student at least once per hour or that will make it easier for you to control the classroom environment.

7. **Review the “Sample Procedure Quizzes”** in the online toolbox. Then create a quiz for your students based on your classroom rules and procedures.

**Key Points to Remember**
- Procedures are the railroad tracks – content is the train.
- Each classroom procedure needs to be taught, practiced and reviewed.
- Using images and other non-verbals, such as songs, hand signals, and gestures, is an effective way to reinforce key procedures.
- Proximity helps keep students focused.
- Pauses and eye contact can be effective in getting student attention.
- A timer or music can be useful in helping students make transitions.
- Break directions into small “chunks.”
Session Nine:
Consistency

Reading
Chapter Nine (pages 130 - 139)

Focus of Chapter
Being consistent does not mean being a robot; it arises out of caring for our students and their learning. When we are inconsistent we send our class mixed messages that ultimately invite inappropriate behavior. Since we are the primary authors of what happens in the classroom, students follow our lead, and they will behave in ways we unconsciously allow. The trick is to get conscious and consistent. In this chapter we look at how to become more consistent in several specific areas. Being consistent in these areas will also help us become more consistent overall, as our “muscle” of consistency is strengthened.

Pre-Reading Prompts
1. How consistent are you about having students raise their hands to speak? Do any of your students consistently speak out? Do any others never volunteer?
2. How does it feel when a student argues with you? How do you respond – externally and internally? What about when a parent argues with you?
3. What has been your experience with using hand signals or other non-verbal cues for students? How did this work?

Post-Reading Discussion & Reflection Questions
1. What procedures, if enacted consistently, are keys for keeping classroom chatter and chaos to a minimum?
2. What role does ‘being the adult’ play in how you handle a parent or student attempting to argue? What role does ‘holding your ground’ play?
3. Do you agree that caring leads to consistency? Does consistency allow for more caring?
4. How will you go about reinforcing the consistency you wish to see in your classroom? What strategies from this chapter can help you?
1. **Role-play a classroom where either students or parents speak out and argue** with the teacher. Practice effective ways of addressing this. Switch so that everyone has a chance to be the teacher.

2. Review your lesson plans for one day and look for places where you can **build in "off stage" time for yourself** twice in every hour. This would be time when students are working silently or in pairs or in groups, when you could have time to have private conversations with students who need it. Then design a procedure for students to let you know they need a private conversation with you. This could be a special place on the board where students write their names, or a ticket dispenser where they take a "teacher talk" ticket for a later conversation with you. Implement the procedure with your students for a week, and then assess its value.

3. **Observe a colleague, or videotape yourself**, running a class discussion. Make arrangements to discuss your observation or your video with a colleague, specifically noting the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of how hand raising and/or student arguing were addressed. Then review the “Sample Lesson Plans” in the online toolbox on arguing or hand-raising and consider how you might improve your procedure.

4. **Draw, write, or post a message from** yourself to yourself on the back wall of your classroom that is a reminder about consistency. It might be a picture of a hand to remind you to focus on hand raising. It might be a picture of an ear to remind you to speak loud enough (or more softly). It could be a two-sided arrow to remind you to look at and include all students - on both sides of the room, of both genders, of all cultures.

**Key Points to Remember**

- Establish and practice hand-raising policies.
- Avoid letting students argue with the teacher.
- Avoid the “popcorn” effect.
- Hold ground without over-explaining.
- Consistency arises out of our caring for our students and their learning.
Session Ten:
Getting Ready

Reading
Chapter Ten (pages 140 - 153)

Focus of Chapter
Organization and preparation are keys to smooth teaching and smooth classroom management. These are particularly important skills to learn for a new teacher, or one who is transferring to a new school or district, because there are so many things to do and consider. This chapter lays out much of the nitty-gritty of getting ready before the students arrive, as well as what to do in the first weeks of school. And Chapter 11, “The First Week of School,” along with the online toolbox, provides detailed lesson plans for what to do in the first five days.

Pre-Reading Prompts
1. How do you want your room to be arranged, in terms of desk placement, bulletin boards, assignment collection, student work displays?
2. What preparation do you want to do before school begins?
3. What should you do on the first few days of school to establish rapport, and teach procedures, content, and rules?
4. What are your goals – both personal and professional – for this year?

Post-Reading Discussion & Reflection Questions
1. What options do new teachers have to learn the school or district policies and expectations on your campus?
2. How do new teachers access the resources available for help within the school and community?
3. Once school starts, you will need to teach and implement many classroom procedures. How can you design the procedures and the ways you will teach them before the students show up on the first day, so that you will be ready once they show?

Activities & Actionables
1. **Make an appointment with a mentor or veteran colleague** at your school site. In anticipation of that meeting, write down all the questions and concerns that arise for you – particularly the ones that might be keeping you up at night. **Print the Before-School-Checklist** from the online toolbox and choose questions from it as well. When you meet with your colleague, go over all your questions. It can be helpful to schedule this conversation with several different colleagues, to ensure you receive balanced and thorough answers.

2. **Make a list of school resources** (mentors, nurse, janitor, counselor, psychiatrist, librarian) and their contact information.

3. Together with other teachers, **chart out a calendar for the year**, marking in assemblies, holidays, school-wide testing periods, and other special days.

4. **Create two days of substitute lesson plans**, each one on topics that can stand-alone and don't require prerequisite content knowledge. The simpler these lessons are the better. A simple yet meaningful lesson can be built around an educational video, for example. **Also, create a template** for future sub lessons that you can use each time you will be out of school.

5. **Draw a picture of your classroom** and think about your usual “traffic paths” in the room. How might you rearrange your desk arrangement or your own placement in the room for more effective teaching? Discuss with others.

6. What are your anxieties about starting school? **Make a list and divide it into two categories**: things you can take care of before the first day of school, and things you can only address once school starts.

**Key Points to Remember**

- The more prepared you are, the more relaxed you will likely be.
- Addressing some of the questions on the Before School Checklist (p. 142-148) can lower your anxiety about the new school year.
- Find a mentor or veteran colleague you can ask for help or who can answer your questions.
Session Eleven:
The First Week of School

Reading
Chapter Eleven (pages 154 - 169)

Focus of Chapter
Planning a solid first week of school helps set a positive tone for the rest of the year. The first week should combine the teaching of procedures, rules & consequences, academic content and establishing positive rapport with students. In this chapter the elements of a well-planned first week of school will be laid out along with replicable templates and planning guides. In addition, the online toolbox will provide dozens of sample lesson plans and activities that teachers can use, or adapt for use, in the first weeks of school.

Pre-reading Prompts
1. What are the most important things you want to accomplish or communicate to your students in the first week of school?
2. What resources are available to help you with the planning of your first week of school?

Post-Reading Discussion & Reflection Questions
1. What questions should we plan to answer for our students on the first day of school? Which procedures will be the most important for you to teach on the first day? (See list on page 160)
2. What are some games or activities we can use as ice-breakers on the first days of school?
3. What are some good techniques for remembering students’ names quickly?
4. How important is to teach academic content in the first week, versus teaching rules and procedures?
5. Which parts of the “First Week of School Planning Template” (p. 163 for secondary, p. 164-165 for elementary) do you want to adopt and/or adapt for use in your first week?
6. Re-read the chart comparing the tone that is set by Mrs. Allsgood and Mrs. Meanswell on pages 166-167. Which one or two of the things in the Mrs. Allsgood column are you having the hardest time accepting, have you been guilty of breaking in the past, or are you worried you can't pull-off?

7. Re-read the list of myths listed on pages 167-168. Which of these had you heard? Does reading the “reality” help you be more at ease?

Activities & Actionables

1. Go into the online toolbox and review the “DAY 1” linked resources available to you on the clickable “First Week of School Planning Templates.” Rank each resource, lesson plans, and activity offered on “DAY 1” on a scale from 1-3. 1 being you wouldn’t use it, 2 being you might use it, and 3 being you will definitely use it. Discuss your rankings with a colleague.

2. Sketch out your first week of school. Use the templates on pages 163-164 as a reference or look at the expanded versions of these templates and their accompanying resources in the online toolbox.

3. In a group of 6 or more, play two or three different name games with your colleagues. See suggestions for games on p. 159 and also in the online toolbox. Decide on one that you could play with your class in the first week.

4. Create an easily modifiable seating chart template that you can write students names into once you have your class list(s). Consider seating students alphabetically by their first names initially, to help with memorizing them.

Key Points to Remember

- Your actions and inactions set the tone in the first week.
- Every day of the first week should include establishing rapport, teaching procedures, teaching content, and reviewing rules & consequences.
- Students are nervous on the first day and have many questions and needs that need to be met in order for them to feel safe.
- Be prepared to feel under-prepared, no matter how much you prepare.
Session Twelve: Lesson Design

Reading
Chapter Twelve (pages 170 - 197)

Focus of Chapter
Classroom management doesn’t occur in a vacuum; it is intricately tied to what we teach and how we teach it. The ideal classroom is a place where learning is enjoyable — and high-level engagement happens every time we teach a lesson. It’s no surprise, then, that by motivating and engaging students, we can keep management problems at a minimum. This chapter introduces many techniques for getting and keeping student attention and increasing student participation and enjoyment of learning through active engagement.

Pre-Reading Prompts
1. Given a body of information to impart to your students, what process do you go through each time to make the information “learnable” for them? In other words, what is your internal checklist for making sure that your lesson plan will be engaging and help your students learn?
2. What strategies have worked the best for you in engaging all of your students? Share your ideas.
3. Which students would you like to see more actively involved? What do you think is preventing them from engaging in your lessons? What ideas do you have for better addressing their needs?

Post-Reading Discussion & Reflection Questions
1. Do you agree that starting a lesson or class with a silent activity (p.173) is important? Why or why not?
2. What strategies can you use to help students get focused and ready to learn?
3. How can you involve more “legal” talking? (p. 177)
4. What are some ways that you can increase movement and/or variety into your lessons?
5. How might you get 100% participation from your students during Q&A or class discussions?
6. What are the advantages of slowing down delivery of content? What strategies can help us do this?
7. What are some effective ways to handle absences and late work?
8. What kinds of things could you offer as choices on a finished early poster in your classroom?

Activities & Actionables

1. Work in pairs or small groups to design a single lesson for your class or classes. Begin by clearly stating the outcome you want to achieve. What will the students know or be able to do by the end of the lesson? Then plan backwards. How will you assess that they know and are able to do what you wanted? What skills and procedures will they need to know in order to accomplish this? How will you hook them into the lesson? How will you incorporate movement, humor, legal talking, variety, and/or 100% participation into the lesson? How will you chunk the lesson into small, digestible pieces of 5-15 minutes with active engagement activities happening between pieces?

2. Review the “Total Participation Techniques” in the online toolbox and rank them in order as to how likely you are to try them. Choose one technique that is new to you, and try it for a week with students.

3. Review either the “Increasing Movement” article or the “Randomly Pairing Students” resource in the online toolbox and discuss the techniques you find there with a partner or group. Decide together on one idea you will all try for one week. After implementing for a week, discuss the outcome.

4. Consciously increase your focus on closure for the next week, using one or more of the ideas offered in this chapter (p. 196-197).

5. Create a "Finished Early?" Poster using images, words or both to list 3-5 things your students should do if they finish their assigned work early. Make sure at least one of the things listed is open-ended (like "read silently" or "color quietly"). Introduce it to your class or classes, and refer individual students to it when needed.
6. With a partner or small group, **design a system for dealing with absent and returning students.** Implement it for two weeks and then de-brief and refine the system with your partner(s).

**Key Points to Remember**

- Start each lesson with a focus on what students will learn, not on what you will teach.
- Check for understanding in multiple ways.
- Make plans for absences and late work.
- Use variety and pair or group work.
- Slow down delivery and break lesson into smaller “chunks.”
- Involve all students, especially in the closure of each lesson.
Session Thirteen:
Rules and Consequences

Reading
Chapter Twelve (pages 200 - 245)

Focus of Chapter
While assuming the best about our students, caring for them, preparing well and carrying a sense of inner authority help prevent most problems, there are bound to be times when intervention is necessary. In schools this intervention is usually called “consequences.” All teachers, either overtly or subtly, employ rules and consequences. In this chapter we explore the what, how, and why of choosing and enforcing classroom rules. Rules that are worded behaviorally rather than morally and that are enforced with a clear but flexible hierarchy of consequences will lead to a safe and structured learning environment where all students, even our toughest, have an opportunity to learn and thrive.

Pre-Reading Prompts
1. Do the students in your class know the rules? What are they?
2. What is the hierarchy of consequences for failing to follow the rules?
3. How do you feel about yourself as a rule-keeper and/or consequence-giver?
4. When is it appropriate to send a student out of the room? What has been your experience – both positive and negative – in doing this?

Post-Reading Discussion & Reflection Questions
1. Page 202 lists principles for classroom behavior and page 205 lists assumptions about consequences. How do your own principles and assumptions differ from these? How are they similar? How can you shift the underlying principles that operate in your classroom?
2. What is on your hierarchy of consequences? Where are the gaps? How can you fill those in?
3. What sort of “behind the scenes” efforts can be effective in curbing misbehavior (p. 217-218)? Which ones might you realistically incorporate this year?
4. What can be learned from Grace’s story of “Christopher and the cell phone” (p. 221-222)? And/or which steps of the “Consequences in Action” (p.225-227) seem the most difficult to implement? How can you prepare yourself to push through this difficulty?

5. How does the following quote relate to your experience as both a student and a teacher? “Ultimately, teacher yelling, displeasure, and anger are tiring and tiresome consequences...If yelling at our students is habitual, we may ‘win the battle,’ but we’ll end up creating a war.” (p. 231)

6. When is it appropriate to delay a consequence?

7. Which of the strategies on “How to Get a Class Quiet” (p.231-235) have you tried? How did each work out? How could your implementation of each be modified to work better? Or, what other strategies might you try?

8. Brainstorm a variety of methods for documenting misbehavior. Would the “DOTS” method (p. 238) or a card or clip system (p. 239) work for you? Why or why not?

9. What are your feelings about the difference between extrinsic and intrinsic rewards? Appreciation vs. praise? Gifts vs. rewards? Are your consequences designed and implemented as punishments, or as tools for teaching behavior?

**Activities & Actionables**

1. Plan an activity in which your students can help you create or modify your classroom rules. See sample ideas in “Making Classroom Rules Activities” in the **online toolbox**.

2. Take turns practicing the “teacher look” that gets kids to know that you are committed to holding your ground.

3. **Role-play with a partner, or use a mirror**, and give your partner a consequence from a place of frustration and anger. Raise your voice and really let them have it. For example, you might yell: "Stop it! Sit down and get to work!" Then try to yell at your partner/mirror again, but this time try to keep the muscles between and around your eyes soft (free of all tension-no squinting, no widening etc.) while yelling and see what happens. Switch roles and give your partner a chance to try giving a consequence each way.
4. For two days in a row in your classroom, when any student is off-task or being defiant and you are feeling frustrated or angry, begin your response to them with the words "you have a choice right now..." or "I have a choice for you..." and then calmly give them the choice to be appropriate (be specific about what you want them to do) or earn a consequence (be specific about what it would be).

5. Brainstorm examples of appreciation and praise. With a partner, practice giving praise and appreciation, and discuss the differences.

6. Make a list, or mark in your book, the consequences listed on pages 213-218 that you already use. Notice in which sections you have marked the most and in which sections you have marked the least number of items. Highlight a few additional consequences to try in the sections where you marked the least number of items.

7. Create a new, tiered hierarchy of consequences, with multiple things listed on each tier, so that you can be more flexible about how you respond to individual misbehaviors. Make sure every consequence you list is something you are willing to use. Review pages 213-218 for ideas. Try to have at least 4 or more things listed on each tier. Use the “Blank Hierarchy Planning Template” and/or review the “Sample Tiered Consequences Hierarchies” in the online toolbox for samples, ideas, and support.

Key Points to Remember
- Limit the number of rules to five or six.
- Make rules specific and clear, and word them behaviorally, not morally.
- There are no punishments, just consequences.
- Consequences serve as a pause to get student attention.
- Use a flexible hierarchy of consequences, starting with the mildest.
- Consider giving students input in forming rules and consequences.
- Let the consequences do the talking.
- Consistently implement a procedure for quiet or getting attention.
- Give students choices when giving consequences.
- Use soft eyes to help keep your non-verbal body language and tone of voice firm, yet soft.
- Document misbehavior with a system that works well for you.
Session Fourteen: 
When Consequences Don't Work

Reading
Chapter Thirteen (pages 246 -271)

Focus of Chapter
For particularly tough kids and situations, school consequences don’t always change behavior. Nor does employing all the approaches outlined in previous chapters. What then? How do we help our students to make permanent, positive changes? While there are no guaranteed solutions, the most effective approaches arise out of our tried-and-true combination of assuming the best about students and helping them to assume the best about themselves, connecting with them, going under the wave of their resistance, and breaking things into simple steps. In this chapter we look at some techniques to help students break chronic cycles of misbehavior. Though these kinds of techniques require commitment, compassion, patience and lots of time and energy to implement effectively, they can help our students who need it the most make permanent positive changes.

Pre-Reading Prompts
1. What do you do when a student continues to misbehave; no matter what consequence is given?
2. Which two of your students are you most concerned about? If you could help each one break just one of their chronic negative behaviors (though they may have many that need breaking), what one behavior would you want to help each one break and why?
3. Discuss a conversation you had with a challenging student, when you were able to “reach” him or her. What was it that you did or said (or didn’t do or say) that seemed to make the difference?
Post-Reading Discussion & Reflection Questions

1. Why do you think your toughest two students are regularly acting out in class? What could be behind their behavior? Refer to the list on pages 248-249. What can you do about each of these reasons, if anything?

2. Of the 5 Steps to Breaking the Cycle of Misbehavior (p. 254), which one seems like it will be the most difficult for you to follow through with? How can you get the support you need around this?

3. How can you prioritize the strategies suggested in this chapter, given the limited time that you have?

4. What resources does your school have to help students whose problems may be beyond the scope of any one teacher? Your mentor or other veteran teachers can be a great help in finding these resources. Ask for their help.

5. How could your school modify the Village Intervention (p. 267-271) to work for the one, two or three students in the school who are in the greatest need?

Activities & Actionables

- Create a plan to help the student you are most worried about “Break the Cycle of Misbehavior” (p.253-254). Review the “Tips and Samples for Breaking Cycles of Misbehavior” in the online toolbox before you start.

1. In grade level teams, generate a “Top 3” list of specific students in each grade whose behavior may be a serious cry for help. Compare notes, brainstorm suggestions and generate a specific action plan for each one. Be careful not to let this degenerate into a complaint, “ain't it awful” session; focus on coming up with specific action plans. Who is going to do what, when? Review the Village Intervention (p. 267-271) for ideas. In many cases, a student who is acting out in your class is behaving well in another, and has behaved well in previous grades. Find out who is having, or has had, success and what approaches have worked well.

2. In groups of three, person A talks for two minutes, describing a challenging student/situation. Then persons B and C take two minutes to ask clarifying questions, which person A answers. Then persons B and C talk to each other about person A in the third person, offering suggestions and advice. Then all three debrief. Rotate to give everyone a chance to share their
situation. This can help generate “outside-the-box” perspectives and solutions.

**Key Points to Remember**

- Understand why students act out (p. 248-249).
- If students are crying out for attention, find ways to give it to them, that helps them and the whole class.
- Keys to change = want to change, know how, practice, be conscious of choices, receive on-going support.
- Use private conversations and writing.
- Circle the wagons for a Village Intervention with the school’s toughest students (p. 267-271)
- Assume the best – students *want* to change!
Session Fifteen:
Making Changes

Reading
Chapter Fifteen (pages 272 – 281)

Focus of Chapter
Growing in the teaching profession involves regularly making changes to improve our craft and better serve our students, which can be challenging for even the best-intentioned teachers. This chapter debunks myths about making changes, and offers simple steps for deciding what changes to make, how and when to make them, and how to stay in inner authority while doing so.

Pre-Reading Prompts
1. Think of a time when things were not going the way you wanted in your classroom. How did you go about making productive changes to improve the situation? Did your efforts yield the results you wanted? Why or why not?
2. What are the benefits of having the entire school involved in making and discussing changes to classroom instruction?

Post-Reading Discussion & Reflection Questions
1. What are the top 2 changes you would like to see in your classroom? In your school?
2. What part does inner authority play in making successful changes to our instruction?
3. Re-read the nine-step road map to making changes (p. 277-279) and discuss which steps make you the most uneasy. How can you move through your discomfort or resistance to these steps?
4. How might your school use or modify the steps for making school-wide changes found on pages 279-280?

Activities & Actionables
1. List two things you’d like to see change in your classroom. Find a partner or several partners who are looking to make the same or a similar change.
Together, rough out how you will go about making the change, using the nine-steps for making changes on pages 277-279. Use the “Outline for Creating Procedural Lesson Plans” in the online toolbox to help you with your planning.

2. Review the “Daily Self Assessment Checklist” and the “Implementation Troubleshooting Checklist” in the online toolbox. Select one to use in the coming week and discuss the outcome with a colleague.

3. Review some of the “Sample Procedure Lesson Plans” in the online toolbox. Decide on one you can use or adapt, and implement it in the coming weeks.

Key Points to Remember

➢ Choose to make changes one at a time.
➢ It’s never too late to make positive changes.
➢ When making mid-year changes, give it 8-10 days of reinforcement.
➢ Assume the Best- students want you to run a tight ship, even when they resist your efforts at doing so.
Session Sixteen
Strategies for Admin and Teacher Leaders

Reading
Chapter Sixteen (pages 282 – 295)

Focus of Chapter
Student success requires support, not only from classroom teachers, but from teacher leaders as well. If you are a school administrator, this chapter is for you. It offers approaches and strategies to help you support your teachers to support their students. It’s also valuable for mentors, district-level administrators, and other teacher leaders. The goal is to invigorate teachers to empower and improve student learning, streamline transitions, and increase instructional time, at the same time decreasing referrals and suspensions, and improving the overall classroom and school climate.

Pre-Reading Prompts
1. In which areas of classroom management would you most like to see your staff improve?
2. How have you supported teachers around classroom management in the past? What has been effective and what has not?

Post-Reading Discussion & Reflection Questions
1. What can you do to effectively walk the line with teachers to be both a collaborator, in a position of support, and also a supervisor/evaluator, in a position of authority?
2. Which specific items in this chapter are you most interested in pursuing? Why?

Activities
1. Choose one area you want to pursue with your teachers. Read that chapter and outline a plan to share that information with your staff. Create a tangible task they can complete.
2. Do informal, 5-10 minute, drop-in observations throughout the next week. After each one, place a note in the box of each teacher you observe only noting one or two things they did particularly well.

3. Send a memo to your staff asking each one to plan to come to the next staff meeting with a success or highlight to share. Be ready to share some things of your own.

4. Review the “Activities & Actionables” sections for each chapter in this book study/facilitator guide. Which ones do you think would benefit your staff the most? Make a priority list and plan a way to weave some of these activities into your on-going professional development efforts (i.e. through staff meetings or PLCs, etc.)

Key Points to Remember

- Find ways to positively connect with staff as a whole and individually
- The challenges that teachers face in working with students are often parallel to the challenges administrators face when working with teachers. The approaches that work for each are often quite similar.
- As you model effective strategies for working with your teachers, you will reinforce effective strategies that they can use in working with their students.
Session Seventeen
Putting it All Together – Final Thoughts

Reading
Chapter Seventeen (pages 296 – 302)

Focus of Chapter
Effective classroom management isn’t simply a matter of giving out consequences or even of connecting positively to students or designing effective lessons. It involves many complex and interconnected experiences and choices. True learning goes beyond the strategies and checklists to instill a sense of wonder in the classroom. In this chapter we look at the big picture of the connection between classroom management and wonder in the classroom, and classroom management and our own growth in the world.

Pre-Reading Prompts
1. What do you look for when observing another teacher?
2. What role does fun play in teaching and learning?
3. How do you balance teaching with having a personal life?

Post-Reading Discussion & Reflection Questions
1. Discuss a time when there was a sense of magic in your classroom. What do you think brought about that sense of magic, and how can you recreate it?
2. How do your students respond when they feel lost? How do you respond? What are ways you can help your students (and yourself) “stay in the game” when feelings of “lostness” and frustration kick in?
3. How do the concepts of inner authority, holding our ground, and assuming the best influence our lives and our happiness outside of the school setting?
4. Discuss lessons where your students had fun. What are additional ways to increase the level of enjoyment in your classroom?
5. Respond to the following quote (paraphrased from page 300): “What more challenging environment can there be to continue to assume the best about people, than the arena of classroom management?”
6. Reflect on ways that your classroom can contain “true learning [which] is exhilarating, mind expanding, and fun.” (p. 299)
Activities & Actionables

1. Brainstorm lessons that you have taught that caused students to experience frustration. With a partner, reframe the lesson, to either minimize their frustration, or to allow them to welcome it.
2. With a partner or group, discuss each of the four ingredients in “A Recipe for Learning” (p.298-299). Which things make you uncomfortable and which are you ready to delve into?
3. Make a list of ways you can bring more fun into your teaching. Consciously try to implement some of the ideas in the coming weeks and then to discuss the results with a colleague.

Key Points to Remember

- Use the observation checklist – a simple guide for effective classroom management.
- Recipe for learning – a way to bring wonder into the classroom.
- The skills of classroom management are connected to life skills, both for individuals and society.

And Finally...

Please email Rick and Grace with feedback about the book, this guide, your teaching, your mentoring, or anything else... mail@consciousteaching.com