

## News Letter - May 15<sup>th</sup>, 2006

### The Courage To Reflect

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*Note: The Student Success Mindset Ezine will be going to monthly publications for the summer months. Bi-monthly publications will resume in September. Have a great summer!*

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Coming in the Fall - The Coach Approach to Classroom Management!

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#### The Courage to Reflect

Do you have an end-of-the-year reflection ritual? This year, I want to challenge you to take reflection to a whole new level. Typically we look back at the teaching strategies, the materials, processes, or techniques of our work to see what needs to be improved upon.

A greater challenge is to look deeply at ourselves - our style of teaching, our relationships with students and colleagues, and our ability to create the conditions in our classrooms that are ideal for learning. If you are a parent or an administrator, examine your relationships, the kind of service you are delivering, and the conditions you are creating in your work or home environment. Are your actions getting the results intended? What unintended results are you getting?

It takes courage to reflect at this deeper level because we are afraid of what we might see - someone less than perfect. It is much easier to look outside of ourselves for the causes of what is not working in our classrooms - poverty, disrespectful students, or lack of funding.

The first step to deeper self-reflection is self-acceptance. Accepting the fact that we are humans on a path of growth and development allows us to look at our imperfections with compassion instead of reprisal. Our journey is unique to each of us; we bring different strengths and different experiences to teaching, parenting or leadership. Our wholeness depends upon accepting ourselves as whole and complete where we are now on this journey of growth and development. Without acceptance, we don't have the courage to ask the tough questions.

The second step is to ask ourselves the questions that we fear the most:



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- How do my students (children, co-workers) describe me?
- Are they invested in learning in my class?
- Are they enjoying learning?
- Are my management practices fear-based or based on a deep respect and caring?
- Am I seen as someone who is helpful?
- Do my students (children, co-workers) believe I believe in them?
- Do my colleagues feel I am open and sharing?
- Are my professional relationships on a professional level?
- Do I bring an enthusiastic and caring attitude to my class (home, work environment)? What would my students' opinions on the subject be?
- Am I interested in my students (children, co-workers) as real people or are they merely part of the "job?"
- Am I happy with my performance, my efficiency, or my connectedness to others?

Self-awareness is key to personal growth and comes primarily from the practice of reflection. Self-awareness through reflection provides the direction we need to move towards our goals and aspirations. We are courageous when we face who we are and take positive action based on our reflections. Want to model lifelong learning? Add your own questions to the list. Then openly practice reflection. Be that model for others!

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Online Newsletter for Student Success Mindset™. If you find the information in this newsletter of value, please forward it on to your colleagues and friends.

If you have an idea or story to share related to this topic, please [drop me an email!](#)

When Kids Think They Can, They Will! The Teacher's Guide to The Student Success Mindset™ - [See It On The Web Site](#) or [Buy It Online](#)

Activities in personal growth and development.

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