

# Appendix

## LIFE ON A ROLL

**Purpose:** To have teachers reflect on why they became teachers and what events brought them to their current positions.

### Materials Needed:

- Pencils, pens, markers
- Rulers
- Rolls of paper (similar to receipt machine tape)

### Procedure:

1. Give each teacher a long strip of paper. Have them mark off a timeline of their life from beginning to present.
2. Ask each teacher to chronologically note important events in his or her life (good and bad) including those that influenced his or her choice to become a teacher.
3. Allow teachers plenty of time to create their timelines, draw pictures, write words, or otherwise depict their information in a way that best suits them.
4. Tell teachers they do not have to share personal events if they don't want to, but they should mark the proper place on their timelines with a code of some sort to indicate to them when it happened.
5. Either with a partner or in small groups, have participants share their timelines (as much as they are comfortable with) and explain how they ended up where they are now.

*(Optional):* You can display the timelines for others to see (with or without names on them).

## REALISTIC AWARENESS

### (Checking the Facts)

Before acting or reacting to news about a challenge or problem, it is helpful to answer the following questions about the information you have.

Describe the mandate, problem, event, or proposal:

1. If the report is about what “they” are doing, who exactly is that? Who is responsible for the decision and/or decision implementation? Be as specific as possible.
2. Have I fact checked the information I have? How thorough was I? How could I learn more?
3. Have I heard more than one side of the issue? Did I give equal weight to differing views? If not, why?
4. Is my conclusion or opinion based on the views of others? Have I considered their possible bias(es) and credibility? Are there limiting factors to accepting their views at face value? What are they?
5. Is it possible my opinion was shaped by my preexisting ideas and conclusions? Did I attribute motives to people’s words and/or actions based on my prior beliefs? How fair was I in my judgments?
6. Was there an opportunity for me to give my opinion or to contribute my ideas that I failed to capitalize on?
7. Am I more focused on reacting to the news about this situation than on figuring out a way to make it work? Describe.
8. Have I closely examined any supporting data and taken a hard look at their rationale?
9. Have I made an effort to contact other schools or groups who have tried similar ideas? Explain.
10. Have I reflected on the full potential of this idea (both pros and cons) with a concentration on how it will affect students?

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## THE FIVE PRINCIPLES OF DELIBERATE OPTIMISM

1. What is the challenge you are dealing with? Explain fully the situation you have and how you feel about what is happening.
2. What steps have you taken to gather as much information as you can about your situation? Where can you go to find further facts and evidence?
3. List the contributing factors that are beyond your control at this time. Explain how you can minimize their impact on your present situation.
4. List all the things you *could* control that would make a positive impact on your situation.
5. Describe the things you are willing to do to at this time to improve your situation. Be specific.
6. What steps could you take, but you do not plan to take at this time? Explain why you are choosing not to control some of the variables that you could.
7. What will be your first step toward improving your situation? When will you do it? Estimate the time it will take you to put your plan into action.
8. When will you review your progress toward your goal? What indicators will you look for in order to know if you are successful or not?

## HAPPINESS AND OPTIMISM

To get a sense of just how optimistic you are, you can take one or more of the following surveys online:

- **Psychology Today Happiness Test**
  - [http://psychologytoday.tests.psychtests.com/take\\_test.php?idRegTest=1320](http://psychologytoday.tests.psychtests.com/take_test.php?idRegTest=1320)
- **Learned Optimism Test** (adapted from Dr. Martin Seligman's book, *Learned Optimism*)
  - <http://www.stanford.edu/class/msande271/onlinetools/LearnedOpt.html>
- **About.com Optimism Test**
  - [http://stress.about.com/library/optimismquiz/bl\\_15optimism\\_quiz.htm](http://stress.about.com/library/optimismquiz/bl_15optimism_quiz.htm)
- **Los Angeles Times Optimism Test**
  - <http://articles.latimes.com/2000/jan/05/news/mn-50931>
- You can take a test about your resiliency at **The Resilient Leader Website:**
  - <http://www.ed.uab.edu/tri/teacherresilienceprofile.asp>

The **ProTeacher** social network ([www.proteacher.net](http://www.proteacher.net)) is a free online teacher community that has inspirational messages from teachers K–12. On the board, teachers post anecdotes about how they have been inspired, encouraged, or delighted by various positive events during the teaching day. This site has real life stories full of hope and optimism about the teaching profession.

## WEBSITES FOR GETTING TO KNOW OURSELVES AND EACH OTHER

- **Online Gregorc Test** (not the actual one, but close enough)
  - <http://www.thelearningweb.net/personalthink.html>
- Pretty good test for modalities:
  - <http://www.agelesslearner.com/assess/learningstyle.html>
- Another good modality test:
  - <http://www.personal.psu.edu/bxb11/LSI/LSI.htm>
- Lots of different test opportunities of all descriptions:
  - <http://www4.uwsp.edu/education/lwilson/links/learningstyles.htm#Learning%20Styles>

## TEN TIPS FOR IMPROVING INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS

1. Before you say anything to anyone, ask yourself three things:
  - Is it true?
  - Is it kind?
  - Is it necessary?
2. When people are talking to you, face them and give them your FULL attention. Put aside anything that is distracting you (mobile devices, paper-work, etc.), and concentrate on hearing what they are saying.
3. When people are talking to you, think about understanding what they are saying rather than what you want to reply. Just “taking turns talking” does not lead to healthy communication.
4. If you hear something negative about yourself, consider if there is any truth to it. If there is, fix it. If there isn't, ignore it and trust that the way you live your life will speak for itself.
5. When dealing with a tense conversation, lower your pitch, reduce your volume, and slow the rate of your speech. Remember the adage, “A soft answer turneth away wrath.”
6. Refrain from using references to past behaviors to bolster your arguments. As much as possible focus on “the here and now.”
7. Remember that it is okay to “agree to disagree.” People can strongly disagree on issues but maintain a healthy respect for each other as individuals.
8. Be honest, be specific, and as much as possible, be affirming to others. Never miss an opportunity to let someone know what it is you like about him or her.
9. Remember that laughter is the great equalizer. Always try to maintain a sense of humor about the foibles of other humans.
10. Do not seek so much to be consoled, as to console; do not seek so much to be understood, as to understand; do not seek so much to be loved, as to love. (Prayer of St. Francis)

## LOYALTY

Elbert Hubbard

If you work for someone, then work for him: Speak well of him and stand by the institution he represents. Remember, an ounce of loyalty is worth a pound of cleverness. If you must growl, condemn, and eternally find fault, resign your position and when you are on the outside, complain to your heart's content. But as long as you are a part of the institution do not condemn it.

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**SOURCE:** Elbert Hubbard



## EFFECTIVE TEAM-BUILDING ACTIVITIES AND ICEBREAKERS

### MY NAME

In small groups, have each person make a name placard, introduce himself or herself, and tell what he or she knows about why he or she has that particular name. Participants can talk about their first names, middle names, last names, or nicknames.

We have seen some great conversations start with this activity. All kinds of insights are revealed about people's heritage, religion, family, and other seldom talked-about topics.

### COMMON ATTRIBUTES

Once participants are arranged in groups, ask one member to be the recorder and write down each individual's name. A group leader should help the members discover 10 (hopefully unusual) things they have in common (e.g., We all have a pierced body part. Each of us has an addiction to chocolate. All of us drive red cars. Everyone's favorite TV show is *Survivor*).

At the end of the icebreaker, one person from each group will introduce each group member and read their group's top five things they have in common. Groups can then vote on whom they thought did the best job of coming up with unusual common attributes. You can award a prize to the group with the most votes.

Pass out a sheet like the one on page 146 to each group.

### WHAT I LIKE ABOUT YOU . . .

This is a powerful exercise in helping to build staff morale. Teachers trade papers and respond anonymously with written positive affirmations to colleagues. Often times, secondary teachers will grumble about doing this activity, but don't be surprised if some of them have a major attitude change after participating in this activity. It is worth the effort to make them do it.

**Objective:** To build a sense of belonging among staff members.

**Materials Needed:**

- Sheets of paper

List each group member's name:

List your most unusual things in common (they must be true and they must apply to ALL members of the group). When you are finished, put \*stars\* by your five favorite ones.

### Step-by-Step Procedure:

1. Tell the teachers that they are going to get the chance to receive affirmations in a very nonthreatening method.
2. Ask each teacher to put his or her name at the top of a sheet of paper.
3. Collect all the papers and give these directions:
  - “I am going to pass out the papers randomly. When you receive someone’s paper think about that person and write something affirming to him or her. You must start your statement with the words *I* or *you*. You cannot use the words *he* or *she*.”
  - “When you finish with your message to the person listed at the top of the page, trade papers with someone. Make sure that you never give a paper to the person whose name is at the top. Trade with someone else if you need to.”
  - “Please write something different from the other responses on the page. You can affirm the same attribute, but you must phrase it in a different way or give a different example.”
  - “Keep trading until I call time.”
4. Be sure to participate with the others on this activity. Put your sheet in there, too.
5. At the end of the activity, collect all papers.
6. Ask teachers to express how it felt to write positive affirmations to others. Why was it easier to write to some than to others? (Speak only in a general sense; do not name anyone specifically.)
7. Pass the papers back to their owners and allow participants to read what was written by their colleagues. Ask anyone who would like to share a particularly meaningful comment to do so.

### PEOPLE BINGO

People Bingo is one of the most popular icebreakers because it’s so easy to customize for your particular group and situation, and everyone knows how to play it. Make your own bingo cards, or use one of the fabulous online card makers.

## MAROONED

This icebreaker is a great introduction when people don't know each other, and it fosters team building in groups that already work together. Ask each participant to name the person, who is not a family member, that he or she would want to be stranded with on a deserted island and tell why.

## IF I COULDN'T BE AN EDUCATOR

In small groups ask teachers to finish the sentence, "If I could never be a teacher, I would probably want to be a \_\_\_\_\_." Group members take turns explaining what they would do for a career if they could not have any kind of a job in education and tell why.

## SCHOOL VIOLENCE, WHAT SHOULD WE DO?

To start the discussion we offer some recent facts about school violence. Please note that the following notes are observations and not meant to stereotype. Also, we ask that you use Step 3 in our Five Principles of Deliberate Optimism, **establish what you can control**, and seek tools and strategies to help you maximize your power, as you explore these findings.

### OBSERVATIONS

- Many of the mass shootings are in rural and suburban areas of the country.
- Forty-two percent of the attacks happen in the morning.
- Eighty-two percent of the attackers concealed the weapons and entered the school grounds without issue.
- Most of the shooters are white. Ninety-six percent are males, 62 percent of whom are between the ages of 13 and 19.
- The alleged shooter had easy access to guns in the home or through the Internet.
- Eighty-seven percent of the incidents involved 0–3 fatalities.
- The shooter was detached from the school, and 80 percent were a former or current student of that school.
- The shooter, if school aged, is often described as a loner or had some other issues within the school setting.
- The shooter did not have an adult advocate within the school setting.

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**SOURCE:** Information gathered from Commonwealth Fusion Center—School Shooting Analysis 1992-2012.

## TIPS FOR WRITING LETTERS TO STUDENTS

- Write things that are positive and specific to the individual student. (Some students will compare their messages from you to see if you say the same things to everyone.)
- Make sure everyone gets at least one note from you during the year.
- Be truthful and be sincere. You can even be funny if that's how you interact with students, but be very careful that your words cannot be misinterpreted as sarcastic or negative (humor is tricky without the facial expressions and vocal tone to indicate that you are joking).
- Make sure your positive comments have “no strings attached.”
- Don't make a big deal of presenting the note. Be as private as possible (you can even leave it in a locker or mail it).
- Don't ask them if they read it; give it freely, and let it go.
- Don't ask for or expect anything in return.

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**SOURCE:** Debbie Silver (2005), *Drumming to the Beat of Different Marchers*, p. 42. Reprinted with permission of the publisher, Incentive Publications by World Book, World Book, Inc., all rights reserved.

## HOW TO LISTEN

1. Stop talking.
2. Imagine the other person's viewpoint.
3. Look, act, and be interested.
4. Don't interrupt.
5. Listen between the lines.
6. Rephrase.
7. Stop talking.

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**SOURCE:** Judith Baenen's workshop, The Difference Between Leaders and Managers

## STUDENT ACCOUNTABILITY SHEET

Students can create their own guidelines on how to treat each other and hold each other responsible in class. Here is an example of a student-generated plan:

### EXPECTATION

Students will treat each other's property with respect.

### AS DEMONSTRATED BY

Breaking something, taking something without permission, or harming someone else's possession.

### ACCOUNTABILITY

Student must fix or replace the item. Student must write a letter of apology to the property's owner. Student must do a favor for the property owner.

### EXPECTATION

Students will act respectfully to each other in and out of class.

### AS DEMONSTRATED BY

Taunting, harassing, name-calling, or threatening either in person, by written word, or through cyberspace.

### ACCOUNTABILITY

Student will apologize in the same method he or she used to bully a classmate. Student will have conference with the teacher. Student's parents may be notified about the incident.

### EXPECTATION

Students will not disrupt the learning process for others.

### AS DEMONSTRATED BY

Talking out or over other people, doing something that distracts others, not sharing supplies or responsibilities.

### ACCOUNTABILITY

Student will have a "time out" to pay back the time he or she wasted. Student will have to apologize to the class. Student will have to help others to make up for any lost information or time he or she caused them.



## STRATEGIES FOR WRITING AWARD-WINNING GRANTS

Debbie Silver

- Make absolutely sure that you have followed ALL rules, regulations, and guidelines! This sounds obvious, but you would be amazed at how many proposals are prescreened and disqualified because of a simple failure to follow directions.
- Have others read and critique your proposal. Let them read it “cold” without any explanation from you. Ask them to make sure that your proposal
  - clearly states a solvable problem,
  - has goals that match those of the sponsor’s Request for Proposals (RFP),
  - indicates how the project will benefit students academically,
  - gives a clear purpose for all items that are to be purchased,
  - presents understandable, detailed descriptions of the activities involved,
  - clearly describes how the method of evaluation will measure progress toward the stated purposes and student needs,
  - has a justifiable budget that directly correlates with the objectives of the proposal, and
  - provides solid evidence that you have the skill and experience to successfully implement your plan (special training, workshops, certifications, courses, etc.).
- Be sure you have filled out all required forms and have obtained the required authorization signatures. Check once again to see that your proposal meets each of the requirements on the RFP.
- Send the proposal in a way that can be certified—Express Mail, Federal Express, UPS, or registered mail. Make absolutely certain that your proposal arrives on or before the due date. Late entries are usually discarded unread.

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# “STUDENT-CENTERED TEACHING”

Debbie Silver

(Student-centered teacher)  
*(Teacher-centered teacher)*

What would you like to learn today?  
*Read pages one through ten.*  
Let's look at that another way.  
*Go do it over ag'in!*

Please move into your groups with speed.  
*Let's get these rows in line.*  
Feel free to get the things you need.  
*Touch nothing that is mine!*

Brainstorm together on this goal.  
*No talking, and don't cheat!*  
To clarify, that is my role.  
*Don't ask me to repeat!*

Please take your time, investigate.  
*Just copy down these rules!*  
Try new ideas, initiate.  
*Don't act like little fools!*

Feel free to use the Internet.  
*You only need your book.*  
Or any source that you might get.  
*You don't have long to look!*

I'd like to shift your paradigms.  
*Learn facts, and skip the rest.*  
Please try to go “outside the lines.”  
*Make sure you pass the test!*

I hope that you've enjoyed today.  
*You've made me lose my mind!*  
So fun to learn in your own way!  
*The standards aren't aligned!*

## INCLUSIVE VERSUS EXCLUDING HUMOR

LAUGHING WITH OTHERS	LAUGHING AT OTHERS
1. Going for the jocular vein.	1. Going for the jugular vein.
2. Based on caring and empathy.	2. Based on contempt and insensitivity.
3. Builds confidence.	3. Destroys confidence.
4. Involves people in the fun.	4. Excludes some people.
5. A person enjoys being the “butt” of the joke.	5. A person does not have a choice in being made the “butt” of the joke.
6. Amusing, invites people to laugh.	6. Abusing, offends people.
7. Supportive.	7. Sarcastic.
8. Brings people closer.	8. Divides people.
9. Leads to a positive repartee.	9. Leads to one-man-down-manship cycle.
10. Pokes fun at universal human foibles.	10. Reinforces stereotypes.
11. Nourishing.	11. Toxic.
12. Icebreaker.	12. Ice maker.

**SOURCE:** Reprinted with permission from Dr. Joel Goodman, Director of The HUMOR Project, Inc. in Saratoga Springs, NY ([www.HumorProject.com](http://www.HumorProject.com)). Originally appeared in Goodman’s *Laughing Matters* magazine.

## SOME SIMPLE SUGGESTIONS FOR MANAGING STRESS

1. **Talk to someone.** Confide your worry to some levelheaded person you can trust; spouse, parent, friend, clergyman, family doctor, teacher, school counselor. Talking things out often helps you to see things in a clearer light and helps you see what you can do about it.
2. **Be honest in identifying the real source of stress.** Eliminate the source if possible. At least decide on a plan to keep it from getting the best of you.
3. **Accept what you can't control.** Death and taxes are just a few of the things in life you can't avoid. Try to prepare for them as much as possible.
4. **Take good care of yourself.** Eat right. Get enough sleep. Exercise. Learn a relaxation technique. Schedule recreation where you do something for pleasure, something that helps you forget about your work.
5. **Go easy on your criticism.** Don't expect so much of others, and you won't be disappointed. Instead, look for the good in others. You will feel better about yourself.
6. **Shun the "Superwoman" or "Superman" urge.** Don't expect so much of yourself. Nobody is perfect, or capable of doing everything. Decide what you can do well and what you like to do and put your effort into those things.
7. **Do something nice for somebody else.** Then give yourself a pat on the back.
8. **Take ONE THING AT A TIME.** Attack the most urgent tasks—one at a time. Don't overestimate the importance of what you do. Your mental and physical health are vitally important.
9. **Escape for a while.** Making yourself "stand there and suffer" is self-punishment and not a way to solve a problem. Recover your breath and balance, but be prepared to deal with your difficulty when you are composed.
10. **Work off your anger.** If you feel like lashing out at someone, try holding off that impulse for a while. Do something constructive with that energy. Cool down, then handle the problem.
11. **Give in occasionally.** No one is right all of the time. And, even if you are right, it is easier on the system to give in once in a while.
12. **If you need help, get an expert.** These simple suggestions may not be enough to help you handle your stress. If emotional problems become so distressing that you can't cope, you need *professional treatment*, just as you would for any other illness.

# STUDENT-LED CONFERENCES

## RESOURCES

There are several good resources on student-led conferences that can provide you with more details and information. These are just a few:

- [www.educationworld.com/a\\_admin/admin/admin112.shtml](http://www.educationworld.com/a_admin/admin/admin112.shtml)
- [www.pbs.org/parents/goingtoschool/student-led-conferences.html](http://www.pbs.org/parents/goingtoschool/student-led-conferences.html)
- [www.ascd.org/publications/educational\\_leadership/apr96/vol53/num07/When\\_Students\\_Lead\\_Parent-Teacher\\_Conferences.aspx](http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational_leadership/apr96/vol53/num07/When_Students_Lead_Parent-Teacher_Conferences.aspx)
- [www.thedailycafe.com/public/471.cfm](http://www.thedailycafe.com/public/471.cfm)

## QUESTIONS TO ASK BEFORE YOU START

Here are some questions to ask before you venture down the path of student-led conferences. This activity can be used by an individual teacher, an entire team, or the whole staff.

1. What do we hope to accomplish by utilizing student-led conferences? What are our goals for the experience?
2. How can we align class time used for student preparation for student-led conferences with district/state standards and mandated curriculum?
3. What do we need to do to prepare ourselves for the changing from the traditional parent-teacher conferences to student-led? What information and training will we need?
4. Are our students ready for student-led conferences? What training will our students need? How will we begin to get them ready for this next step?
5. How can we prepare our parents for the move to student-led conferences? How to we inform them throughout the process?
6. What types of work samples do we need to collect for the conferences?
7. What projects and demonstrations can the students present during the conference?
8. How can we include essentials (encore) teachers in the new conference format?
9. Can we use technology to enhance the conferences and/or reach out to parents who are unable to physically be there?
10. How will we assess how well we met our goals? How will we collect data from students and parents after the event?

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