

# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Every book involves the efforts of many more people than the author, but this one, without question, involved the largest team ever. I am profoundly grateful to all the people who helped me make this book a reality.

More than anyone else, I'm grateful to my wife Jenny, who has been my greatest support as I wrote this book. Jenny has tirelessly read every word multiple times, given me great feedback, put together many sections of the book, helped with the design of the forms, reviewed each copy edit and done her own copy editing, and been a wonderful partner throughout the whole process—even putting up with the many times when I have failed at the habits I'm describing. I love you more than anything, Jen. You're my favorite conversation partner, and I've loved putting this book together with you.

I'm grateful to my parents Joan and Doug Knight, who engendered in me a love of learning that is still alive and flourishing today.

My deep thanks to my children Geoff, Cameron, David, Emily, Ben, Isaiah, and Luke; thank you for sticking with me as I've failed again and again at the strategies I describe in this book. You amaze me and fill me with pride when I see the good work you are doing around the world.

At the Impact Research Lab, many consultants have helped immensely. Carol Hatton organized the first study in 2010 and helped with the 2015 study all while doing a million others tasks for me. Devona Dunekack organized, gathered, and analyzed data from the 2015 study; often created surveys; helped design forms; and reviewed the 1,000 plus reflection forms we gathered for this project. Marilyn Ruggles analyzed and organized data, reviewed books and

literature, conducted interviews, and did transcriptions and many other tasks to help me create this book. On very short notice, Jackie Schafer and Stacey Blakeman edited this book and made it much easier for you to read. Kirsten McBride, who has improved every book I have written, proofread the text with great care. I am also grateful to Clinton Carlson, who created the cover for this book. Clint, I am always amazed by your talent.

At the Instructional Coaching Group, Ruth Ryschon and Brooke Deaton have ensured that the consulting work we do goes off without a hitch.

My friends at Corwin have been incredibly helpful. Dan Alpert has been my editor for close to a decade, and I'm profoundly grateful for his wisdom, patience, insight, and feedback. Melanie Birdsall is a wonderful professional who does amazing work and does it while making me feel deeply encouraged. I'm also very grateful to my many additional Corwin partners, Mike Soules, Kristin Anderson, Mayan McDermott, Stephanie Trkay, Monique Corridori, and Taryn Williams.

At the Kansas University Center for Research on Learning, I'm very grateful to Center Director Mike Hock, my colleagues Irma Brasseur-Hock and Jan Bulgren, and my mentors Don Deshler, Marti Elford, and Jean Schumaker.

Finally, I can't even begin to say how deeply grateful I am to the many people who participated in our global study of the Better Conversations Habits and Beliefs. Approximately 200 people from around the world spent hours and hours watching themselves on video, completing the reflection forms, and communicating with our team. Your stories touched me, inspired me, and made it clear to me that trying to have better conversations is a worthwhile endeavor. I've tried to list all of the volunteers at the end of this book.

Finally, I wrote most of this book listening to Miles Davis and Bill Evans, and especially Miles Davis' recordings with his first great quartet on the Prestige Albums he recorded over a weekend in May 1956 and Bill Evans' breathtakingly beautiful *Complete Live at the Village Vanguard*, which has now become my favorite album to listen to while I write.

## Publisher's Acknowledgments

Corwin gratefully acknowledges the contributions of the following contributors:

Lydia Adegbola  
Assistant Principal  
Legacy School for  
Integrated Studies  
New York, NY

Ruthanne Bolling  
Instructional Coach  
Fairview Elementary,  
Richmond  
Community Schools  
Richmond, IN

Dr. Alison Gordon  
Instructor, School  
of Education  
Northwestern  
University  
Evanston, IL

Kathryn Kee  
Educational Leader;  
Owner of Results  
Coaching, LLC  
Shady Shores, TX

Ellen Larsen  
Manager (Teaching  
and Learning)  
Independent Schools  
Queensland  
Brisbane, Australia

Dr. William Sommers  
Retired Principal,  
Leadership Coach,  
Author  
Spring Lake Park District  
Spring Lake Park, MN

Susan K. Woodruff  
Professional Developer and  
Instructional Coach  
KUCRL & Strategic  
Consulting  
Muskegon, MI