

# Acknowledgments

In the fall of 2015, my colleague Kathy Spencer realized that for four decades I had been digging into the detailed behavior of how high expectations teachers acted, minute-to-minute, in their verbal interaction with students and other arenas of classroom life. These observations were part of the book *The Skillful Teacher* and part of numerous courses we taught, but not pulled together in any one place. She urged me to do that “pulling together” and put it in a book others could study. So thank you to Kathy for pushing me over the edge to write this book.

In the early 1980s, I attended a course taught by Jeff Howard on what he called the efficacy paradigm. His point, summarized in a graphic in this book on page 34, was that ability could be grown and the bell curve of intelligence was wrong. Jeff not only caused me to challenge long-held beliefs, but set in motion the quest, laid out in this book, to profile in detail how teachers get underperforming, low-confidence students to believe “smart is something you can get.” We often strove to work together in school districts where Jeff and his team would precipitate the paradigm shift in educators’ beliefs, and we at Research for Better Teaching (RBT) would show how to act in one’s teaching behavior from those beliefs.

In that same decade Jeff brought Carol Dweck up from New York (she was at Teachers College at the time) to share her pioneering research on what she called the incrementalist versus the fixed mindset. These two pioneers laid the groundwork for the current explosion of interest in the growth mindset, finally liberated by Dweck’s popular book, *Mindset*.

Lauren Resnick picked up the ball from Jeff Howard in the 1990s and brought the belief that ability can be grown to her important program on accountable talk at the Institute for Learning at the University of Pittsburgh.

Lest we forget, Madeline Hunter had also been a strong advocate of working deliberately to get students to attribute their success or failure to the degree of effective effort they had put forth. A decade earlier, Jerome Weiner had correlated success in life with such attributions in his groundbreaking work on attribution theory.

Also let us remember Alfred Bandura’s important contributions in the 1960s and 1970s on the importance of self-efficacy beliefs, summarized in *Self-Efficacy: The Exercise of Control*.

Our consultants at RBT have been thought partners with me for decades on High Expectations Teaching. They have all contributed to our collective knowledge and created outstanding training on this material: Marcia Booth, Jan Burres, Laura Cooper, Renee DeWald, Karen Falkenberg, Reena Freedman, MaryAnn Haley-Speca, Elizabeth Imende-Cooney, Nancy Love, Sue McGregor, Deb Reed, Harriet Scarborough, Ruth Sernak, Kathy Spencer, Ann Stern, Aminata Umoja, Jim Warnock, and DeNelle West. Carole Fiorentino, who served RBT so effectively for over two decades, did a final service by making a score of references accurate. Nancy Love especially made key edits in the final weeks of production.

Many thanks are due the teachers and administrators over the decades who have allowed us to make videos of their fine work and share their case studies.

Finally, my wife Margie and four children Genny, Graeme, Greg, and Andrew have each taught me much about the power of persistence and self-efficacy. They have achieved high proficiency at skills for which they had no modeling and no background simply because they wanted to and believed they could. And thank God I never discouraged them.

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