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## **Becoming A More Creative Teacher . . . . .1**

The best lecturer is an interesting book. Realizing this opens the way for innovations in teaching. Instead of telling students, we involve them so they are eager to learn. By becoming more creative teachers, we discover that teaching can be a fascinating adventure.

## **Chapter 1: Teaching With Purpose . . . . .7**

When teaching serves our life purposes, it takes on a special meaning as a mission. What are our life purposes and teaching mission? Instead of simply emulating the styles of admired teachers, we create a unique way to teach that serves our own purposes.

## **Chapter 2: Identity Affects How You Teach . . . . .11**

Identity affects what we try as teachers. If our identities are too conventional, we restrict our creativity and diminish our willingness to take risks. By remodeling our identities, we discover creative ways to teach that inspire us and our students.

## **Chapter 3: Cultivate A Playful Mind . . . . .17**

Playful mind is flexible, imaginative, and eager to think in new ways. With a playful mind, designing innovative learning processes becomes easier. We learn to cultivate more playful thinking, which expands our ability to invent novel approaches in our teaching.

## **Chapter 4: You Have Special Gifts . . . . .25**

Most of us are unaware of our special gifts for teaching. Those gifts are the “creativity tools” we can use to enliven education. Knowing how and when to use specific tools is part of becoming a more creative and effective teacher.

**Chapter 5: Engage Students In Active Learning . . . .29**

“Tell me and I’ll forget. Show me and I’ll learn. Involve me and I’ll understand.” Students become involved when we create experiential exercises that awaken and engage their minds. By emphasizing active learning, we see a sudden rise in students’ attention and receptivity.

**Chapter 6: Be Willing To Take Risks . . . . .35**

Fear permeates education. Teachers and students alike may hold back for fear of being wrong or looking foolish. Those fears add too much caution to learning. We discover how to reduce the size of our fears in order to bring new vitality to teaching and education.

**Chapter 7: Manage The Size Of Your Ego . . . . .43**

Ego is concern for oneself and its survival. The smaller the ego feels, the more it tries to inflate its size. Education is dramatically affected by teachers and students trying to manage the size of their egos. We use “Recovery Claims” to keep our egos from shrinking.

**Chapter 8: Create Motivation And Participation . . .53**

Motivation and participation can be created. We learn to motivate our students by designing learning exercises on “the four cornerstones of motivation.” We increase their participation by understanding what holds them back.

**Chapter 9: Community Service Stimulates Learning . . .61**

When students serve in the community while learning in the classroom, their motivation escalates. With greater interest, their engagement with issues deepens, so classroom learning becomes more dynamic.

**Chapter 10: Cultivate Inspiration . . . . .65**

The mind becomes more playful when it is surprised. One way to surprise it is by creating arbitrary “inspiration points.” This adds a steady stream of novelty to teaching. By learning to create our own inspiration, we discover how easy it is to generate ideas for teaching.

**Chapter 11: Develop Novel Ideas For Teaching . . . .71**

It is easy to fall into a rut while teaching. To discover new ideas and approaches, we travel down unusual pathways. We use “Object Play”

and “Mind Switching” to stimulate our search. When we do, we find creative ideas coming to us with little effort. Fun is added to teaching.

**Chapter 12: Nurture Positive Relationships . . . . .77**

Teachers invent stories about students. When the stories are negative, relationships with students suffer. When they are positive, good relationships develop. By revising our stories, we nurture more positive relationships with our students. This increases mutual trust and respect.

**Chapter 13: Create Balance . . . . .85**

We can become so overworked as teachers, we fall out of balance, feel miserable, and lose our enthusiasm for teaching. Recovering balance helps us to create a greater sense of contentment. While innovating, we accommodate conflicting inner voices, then balance workloads.

**Chapter 14: Stop The Stories That Torture You . . . .95**

We may live in stories of belief that limit us and make us miserable as teachers. Assumptions are beliefs that limit our thinking. Ideals are beliefs that can lead to disappointment and unhappiness. We change our stories so teaching becomes more creative and enjoyable.

**Chapter 15: Give Up Resistance And Resignation . .101**

Resisting what cannot be changed produces frustration. Becoming resigned to situations that can be changed causes alienation. When we give up resistance and resignation, we create a new sense of freedom and greater ease in teaching.

**Chapter 16: Use Questions To Guide The Mind . . .105**

Teachers often ask questions without a clear sense for their impact on the activity of the mind. Questions guide what the mind thinks about and how deeply it engages an issue. We learn to use questions consciously to deepen inquiry, expand options, and empower students to change.

**Chapter 17: Listening Deeply . . . . .111**

Listening usually occurs on the surface. Facts and feelings may be heard, but needs and desires for change are often missed. By learning

to listen at four levels, we hear more as teachers, which gives us the ability to deepen any discussion and to solve problems more effectively.

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Discussions are great learning opportunities when they are focused and dynamic. When we listen deeply and ask probing questions, we engage the interest of students and intensify their learning. The ability to lead dynamic discussions gives our teaching greater impact.

**Chapter 19: Be Receptive To Coaching . . . . .129**

When receiving “criticism,” a teacher’s ego is likely to deflate, so listening stops. “Defend” and “counterattack” may be automatic. We discover how we respond to criticisms, then develop greater receptivity to coaching and change. Our effectiveness increases as a result.

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“Nightmare” students present unique and creative challenges. There are the “unmotivated,” “critics,” “minimalists,” and “tormentors.” Like sleeping nightmares, we wish they did not exist, but they do. How we teach can also make normal students into nightmares.

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When circumstances seem too limiting, we may play it safe and take a conventional approach rather than be creative. Imposed requirements or teaching a large class may weaken our resolve to the point where we forget that using a creative approach is always possible.

**Chapter 23: Teaching Wisdom . . . . .167**

“Wisdom” is not a word often heard in teaching. Yet, when we ask questions about wisdom, the mind gladly seeks answers. We discover the power of wisdom to open new understandings about any issue. We use wisdom as a crucial part of our creativity as teachers.

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Creative teaching enlivens education, deepens a teacher’s impact on the thinking and lives of students, and leads to a sense of greater fulfillment. Imagining those possibilities for ourselves, we discover why we became teachers.

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