



FEATURED TEACHER AUTHOR

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The current state of the world we live in can be overwhelming and disheartening. The social state of America, the demands of the education systems, and the constant pressure to meet the expectations of others can wear on the human psyche.

As I read chapters 4-6 of *The Art of Possibility* by Zander and Zander, I felt enlightened, refreshed, but most of all empowered. Below are my thoughts and reflections to quotes from the book that spoke volumes to me throughout my readings.

“Life is an obstacle course. In order to maximize success, we spend a good deal of time discussing what stands in the way of it” (Page 55, para 2).

In the game of life, we have many paths that can present bumps in the road, potholes, freeways, one-way streets, and scenic routes. Scenery can change daily causing our inner self to become content or disgruntled. Do we see the road as a beautiful gift of nature or that of a nuisance? Our road in this game of life becomes what we make of it. There are many days I find myself taking the bumpy road when I head to work, rather than embracing the obstacles I meet in my classroom.

“The drive to be successful and the fear of failure are, like the head and tail of a coin, inseparably linked” (Page 56, para 4).

Therefore, this lack of embracement when it comes to my classroom and students often stems from the fear of failure and the drive to be successful. When obstacles arise, I begin to see the classroom successes melt away. The battle between good and evil continues as I grasp for new and innovative ways to reach the digital native youth of today. Beginning to embrace failures as trial and error and constant life lessons will allow me to better celebrate the successes that come about after the failures have melted away. After all, failures shape our successes.

“..wake up each day and bask in the notion that you are a gift to others” (Page 58, para. 1).

In recent events that have consumed my life, I have begun to realize that each day is a precious gift. And should not be taken for granted. When I am down and self-absorbed about the perceived trials in my own life, I am reminded by those around me that life could be much

worse. I am reminded that the gifts I possess make me who I am, and I have a multitude of things to offer those around me. I then become refreshed and use the encouraging words to continue to let my light shine down on those around me. When we become self-absorbed of our own trials, we forget that everyone struggles with something much bigger. My students remind me every day, as they walk through my classroom door, about their truckloads of burdens that people their age should not have to carry on their shoulders. I am reminded again to share my gifts with them to help foster dreams and inspirations. I want to embrace my struggles and teach others around me to embrace theirs as well. There is value in the struggle. A story to be told. Sharing our struggles with each other gives us strength to carry on and shape our successes.

“Remember, it’s all *invented!*”(Page 59, para 2).

My daily obstacles are only what I make of them. Is my glass half empty? Or rather half full!

“Throw yourself into a life as someone who makes a difference, accepting that you may not understand how or why” (Page 59. para. 3).

No regrets! I do not want to be wondering, wishing, shoulda’, coulda’, woulda’, when the day is over. I want my students to be as passionate about life, learning, and conquering fears as I am. I do not want them to sit back and let life consume them, but rather teach them skills to get out of life what they put into it. We cannot expect others to do it for us, but need to accept the responsibility to put ourselves out there to make a difference in all we do.

“I am now able to use the possibility that my every act can affect the world to communicate with people in such a way so that a wave of inspiration and happiness can flow throughout the world” (Page 62, Story by Rachel Mercer)

I want my students to connect their creativity and passion to affect the world in positive ways. The knowledge they possess as digital natives can bring a powerful conduit to the digital immigrants. The multi-tasking behaviors that are innate in their souls can help create endless possibilities to enhance the world around us.

“A leader does not need a podium;...” (Page 76, para. 2).

I like the concept of a leader not needing a podium. I have since reevaluated how I can reach my students that are less vocal in class, so that they, too, can be heard. It is important for them to feel empowered and successful in the contributions in our classroom-learning environment.

“Humor can bring us together around our inescapable foibles, confusions, and miscommunications, and especially over the ways in which we find ourselves acting entitled and demanding, or putting other people down, or flying at each other’s throats” (Page 80, para. 4).

When all else fails, you have to be able to laugh. My week ended with the creation of “My Friday Hat!” My students were taken aback when they were greeted at the door with such craziness, but began to embrace the meaning behind the creation of the Friday hat. Sometimes when the world throws us a curve ball, we just need to pick it up and throw it back! By the end

of the day, the Friday hat had evolved because the students kept bringing me things to add to it throughout the day!

“What would we have to change to be completely fulfilled?” (Page 83, para 3).

As humans, can we ever really be “fulfilled?” Fulfillment is also controlled by perception of situations and how you will channel the fears surrounding the situation. How we handle change, failure, success, knowledge, criticism, and humor will all depend on how fulfilled we feel.

“Have it. Be fulfilled...that means becoming aware of the fears, opinions, and positions your calculating self has adopted that stand in the way of simple fulfillment” (Page 84, para. 3).

Embrace it! Live it! Dream it! Empower it! Teach it! ...LIFE is what we make of it!

References:

Image from the personal library of Heather Eaton.

Zander, R. & Zander, B. (2000). *The art of possibility: Transforming personal and professional life*. Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press.