HELPING STUDENTS FIND STABILITY IN TODAY'S CHAOTIC WORLD:

TEACHING THE SKILLS NEEDED TO NAVIGATE THE FOG OF MODERN LIFE

Introduction

The format of this document is a bit different from my norm. You will be provided basic concepts, single-sentence explanations of each concept, and a brief overview of some ways to target that concept for a given age span. Beyond that, there is really nothing more to say. You will be operating within the constraints of your position, location, and the personalities and needs of the children you serve, so you will know best the concept order to tackle and the manner with which each topic should be broached.

Just remember your goal is to provide separation between the student and the chaos of the world. To accomplish this goal, you must build conceptual understanding of that separation and the resilience required to manage the pressures the world creates. This logical, personal, and silence-based reflection is sadly missing in today's world and often must be directly taught. Once that separation is created for the student, they will be free to leverage the own power and control over situations, even the ones that are not of their own making.

In closing, know that there are constraints on how you should approach each lesson. This document has utilized a very low value code level, the Civic Code Level (see the document titled, *Value Code Shifting: Reaching the Hard-to-Reach Student* for value code continuum) to ensure that the content is useful to the widest audience. If you teach in a location that operates under another value code, you can easily expand these lessons (or restrict them) to meet that demand.

Concepts

Concepts

STOPPING AND THINKING WILL HELP ME MAKE GOOD DECISIONS

Teach tolerance and use of "silence" to support personal reflection and planning...

Separation from the group is critical to personal development.

Today's world is noisy, so silence may not be tolerated at first.

Silence is a place of great power and healing.
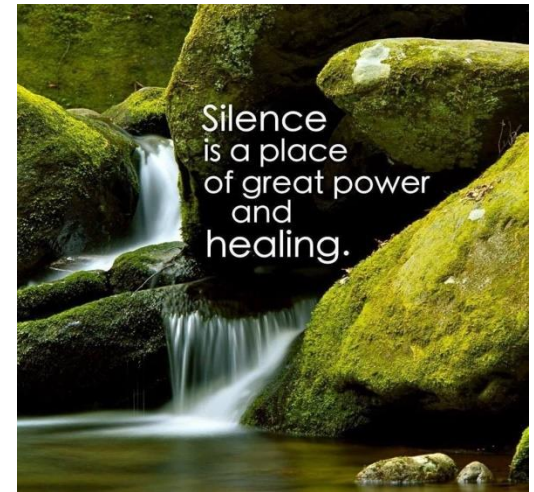
The ability to use "silence" <u>can</u> be systematically taught.

THE SOUND OF SILENCE

Helping students develop thinking skills, self-reflection, and internal behavioral control

By Maria Sargent

Younger Students	Older Students	Oldest Students
• Force "thinking" for a short period of time before making choices (e.g., making a choice for snack)	• Articulate own choice and the reason for it	• Have students construct "remember to think it through" reminder cue
• Teach visualizing each possible choice during the thinking activity	• Articulate why someone else might choose another way	• Teach visualizing for both choice-making and activities such as sports
• Articulating the "good parts" of each possible choice	• Include a short, written intro for each project describing how that topic was chosen	• Address variations in ways to "be silent" and help students find their own methods
• Articulating the "bad parts" of each possible choice	• Have short periods of silence in the morning and right after lunch so students can plan day	• Add stress-reduction strategies to silence periods
• Having to give a reason for a choice	• Provide structure for students struggling with silence and opportunities for practice	• Develop contingencies for choices in difficult situations (i.e., "I feel sick and have to go home" escape excuse)
• Work through "use of silence" continuum		

I CAN'T FIX A PROBLEM UNTIL I UNDERSTAND WHAT IS REALLY WRONG

Teach the ability to articulate the <u>specific</u> problem, not the emotions that stem from the problem…

Which question leads to finding solutions?

"It's broken."

or/

"The wheels won't turn."

PROBLEMS AHEAD

CAUTION

<u>Which specific issue</u> is making me unhappy?
<u>Which specific issue</u> is making me afraid?
<u>Which specific issue</u> is stopping my progress?

Which solution do I need to learn to solve this issue?

Younger Students	**Older Students**	**Oldest Students**
• Teach students to scan situations/problems with toys or activities to gain information	• Encourage students to analyze own work and activities for areas of improvement and plan a strategy to achieve it	• Have students reflect on problems in sports, activities, and schoolwork and generate solutions
• Help them locate the specific problem and be able to verbalize it	• Force students to verbalize social problems as "something that must be fixed" or "what should be changed" rather than focusing on the emotional response	• Have students anticipate problems and determine how to *keep those problems from happening*
• Help them generate possible solutions		
• Help them try out solutions systematically and then assess which solution will work best	• Have them generate solutions, try them, and choose best methods for the future	• Have students discern the difference between real problems and problems based on only their own perception (considered a problem by them but not by others around them)
• Help them state the solution in a short phrase to encourage memory of the solution for the future		

Set short-term and long-term <u>personal</u> goals (you set one….and the student sets one)

Set goals small enough that success is both ensured and rapid.
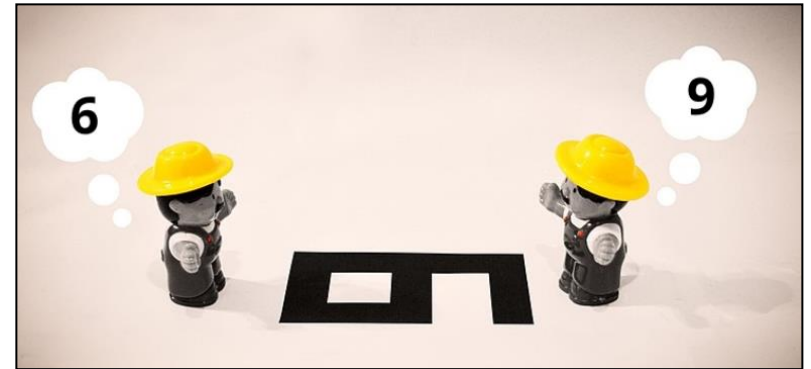
Student goals = learning to goal set
Adult goals = encouraging needed skills

The highly gifted student may need the most help!

Younger Students	Older Students	Oldest Students
• Have students learn to make single choices to plan their play activities • Have students plan two or three choices and eventually whole day • Have students make choices and then <u>prioritize</u> them • Give students a "have to" activity that must be done sometime during their play period and have them plan for it • Give students a "have to" that must be done over the next few days (work up to a week)	• Have students choose a goal for a short activity or work period • Have students choose a daily goal, and you choose one for them as well • Set the two goals for a week-long period • Set the two goals for a week-long period and monitor with a mid-week benchmark of progress • Set the two goals for a week-long period with daily benchmarks	• Have students articulate long-term goals for their schoolwork and their career/interest • Help the students choose two or three short-term goals associated with the above plan • Help the students develop a plan to "check in" on their goals and determine if they are being met or must be adjusted • Help students seek and locate resources to fulfill their plans

ARE THE GOALS BEING PURSUED REALLY WHAT YOU WANT FROM LIFE?

Help students clarify what is important <u>to them</u>...

Socially-approved goals

$\neq$

Personal goals

Younger Students	Older Students	Oldest Students
• Help students understand how opinions vary across a group (i.e., difference in favorite flavor of ice cream) • Play games where students must "be different" or "give a different answer" from everyone else in the group • Help students understand when they are feeling stressed, tired, pressured, or encouraged to "do what everyone else is doing"	• Help students understand how media influences their lives • Encourage them to stop and think about their choices (Is this really what I want to do?) • Have students begin to acknowledge and appreciate how their goals (academics, sports, arts, interests) differ from their peers • Have students share their hopes and dreams with others without fear or embarrassment	• Have students reflect on when they are "going their own way" or "following the crowd" • Discuss how "being different" is not better than "being like everyone else" (key is the reason and value behind the choice) • Look at historical fads and reflect on how silly some of them now seem • Help them locate media situations where same-age peers are following potentially silly trends

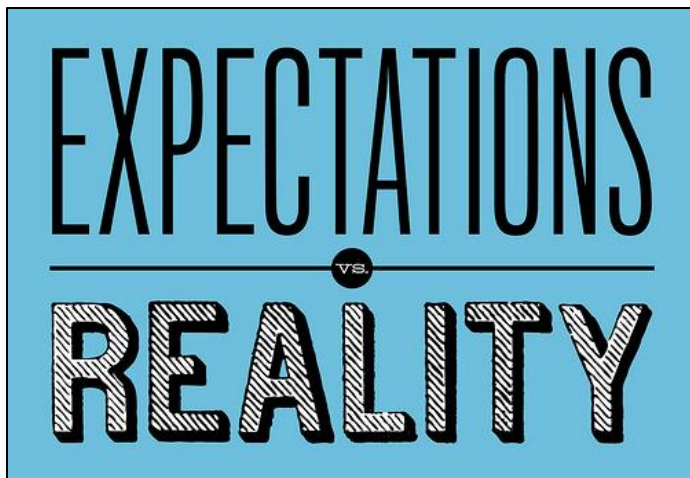# I SHOULD BE FAIR TO MYSELF. I AM NOT THE BEST, BUT I ALSO AM NOT THE WORST!

The Best

THE WORST
HOTEL IN THE WORLD
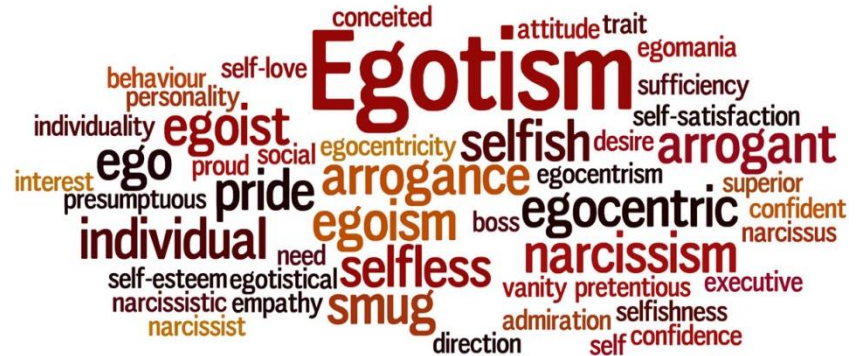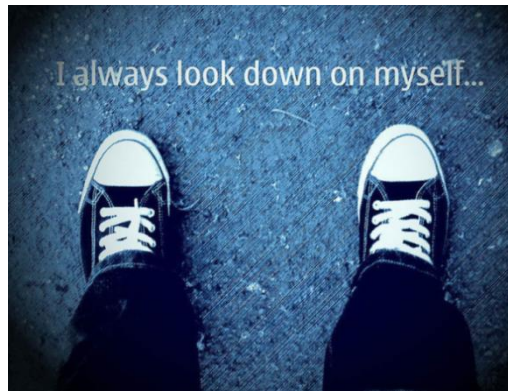
Help students develop the ability to systematically and <u>fairly</u> critique their own behavior and work...

Both extremes will cause problems...

Analyze which situations are setting impossible or stressful expectations...

...and which situations are setting <u>too limited or no expectations</u>!

Younger Students	Older Students	Oldest Students
• Have students articulate what makes a particular play product or activity good or bad and then analyze their own work based on that benchmark • Help them understand when they are setting unrealistic goals (i.e., building a block tower 20 blocks high) and when a goal can be actually accomplished • Help them recognize improvement rather than solely focusing on end results	• Have students continue to analyze work, now connecting the good aspects with recognition of the effort it took for that result • Have them begin to recognize weaknesses as conditions that can be improved over time • Help them accept being both higher and lower in some areas/skills • Help them honestly and fairly critique the work of others	• Have students provide a personal grade for their work in addition to your grade • Help them reconcile the two grades and plan for any deficiencies noted • Plan concrete ways to share accomplishments (NOTE: this should include improvement) • Have them begin to recognize weaknesses and improvement needed by social media figures in addition to just admiring their strengths

Concentrate on taking the "next step" and avoid over-emphasis on "meeting THE goal"…

Do not avoid having students experience failure…

…**but support the learning process.**

Use both lessons as a catalyst for future progress.

$$\frac{effort + consistency}{time}$$

| Younger Students	Older Students	Oldest Students
• Have students view play and work products and articulate the good and "need to improve" qualities • Have students determine if the goals they envision are possible or impossible for the given time and adjust accordingly • Have students recognize things that they are best at and can teach others as well as things they would like to learn from peers	• Help students plan honest short-term and long-term goals to foster improvement • Have them create a personal rating scale to analyze each day's work and activities and plan "how to get to the next number/level" • Help them recognize when progress will be slow and which goals may not be possible, at least at that moment • Have them teach peers the skills and talents they possess	• Help students formally set long-term goals and then create the short-term goals that will be needed for that level of achievement • Help students track goals formally over time using charts and graphs • Help students learn to accept slow progress using social media figures as models of people who have struggled during the course of their achievements

DREAMS DO NOT ALWAYS COME TRUE...
I MUST HAVE A PLAN "B"
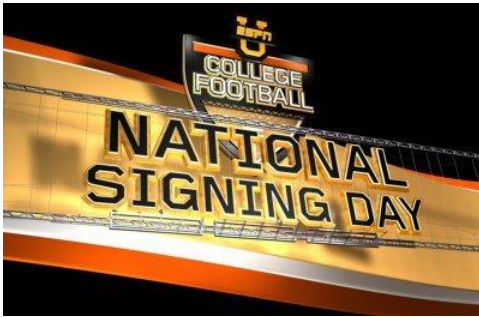
Teach students to create alternative goals...

Support students' dreams because you never know what they WILL become...

...while gently exposing them to related goals in case those dreams cannot be achieved.

If you're a teacher, you're also a:

life coach   motivator   discovery guide
trip coordinator   Negotiator   cheerleader
Rule enforcer   eye opener   role model
organizer   reality checker   fund rai$er
nose wiper   IT SpeciaList   counselor
handwriting expert   dream instiller   mediator
truth detector   entertainer   trainer
event planner   scheduler   decorator

Help students explore how a skill or talent can be used in a variety of careers, both those that are directly related to their "dream" and those that have an unexpected connection.

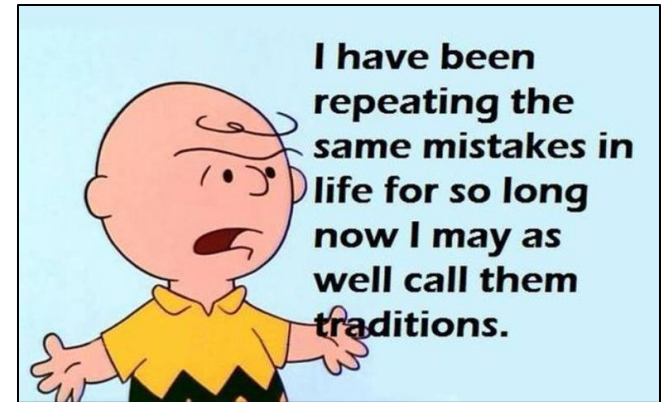| Younger Students	Older Students	Oldest Students
• Help students articulate two or three ways to achieve a goal and learn the concepts of "different way", "Plan B", and "alternative" • Help them begin to envision careers and goals that are prominent and easily defined, given their age • Help them begin to connect behaviors and functional academics to success in those fields (i.e., football players must be able to read their contract)	• Help students come up with two or three ways to achieve a goal or complete a project and then randomly pick which one to use (provides practice in managing unforeseen and unavoidable situations) • Help students take a step back and analyze a problem or barrier to progress and then articulate a different way to achieve a similar end	• Have students begin to visualize a personal career goal or area of interest • Help the students enlarge this career focus to all of the supporting jobs that surround that career (i.e., who are the personnel who work for and support a football player, singer, actor, etc.) • Have students begin to actively make a Plan B, C, etc.

I CAN FREE MYSELF FROM MY OLD PATTERNS

I CAN CHANGE. . .

You cannot discover new oceans unless you have the courage to lose sight of the shore...
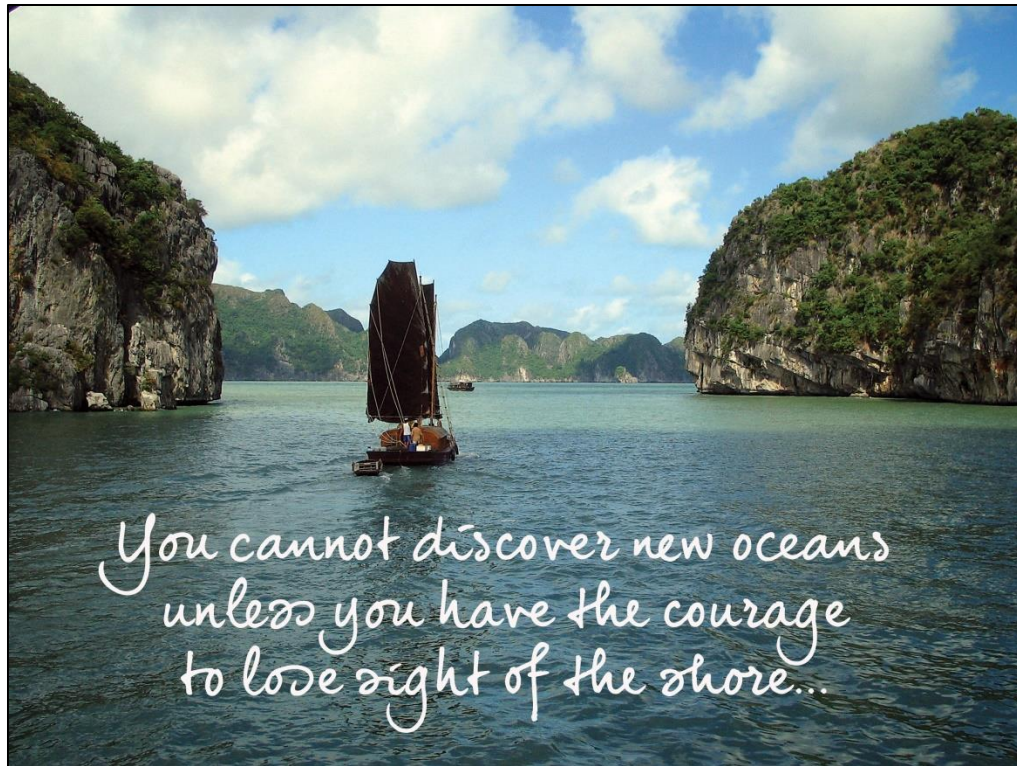
Teach students to *"just start over"* without shame...

MISTAKES are proof that you are **TRYING**

Teach students to face mistakes and failures without shame or discouragement...

I have been repeating the same mistakes in life for so long now I may as well call them traditions.

..but to also realize when repeated failures stem from a lack of effort to change or a need to learn a new skill.

Help them make SPECIFIC plans (with short-term goals) to make the desired change a reality!

PLAN

Younger Students	**Older Students**	**Oldest Students**
• Help students differentiate between doing something the same way and doing something different • Watch children who perseverate on certain patterns or routines and help them to make very small changes • Vary your own class routine on occasion • Teach the words "start over" when something goes wrong (make sure to model this action)	• Help students recognize when they are using good patterns or stuck in incorrect ones • Help them make small changes and eventually plan for those changes • Help students discern when they are trying their hardest (but maybe still failing) and when they have given up. Help them make plans for both circumstances • Link the above plan to short-term goals to ensure success	• Have students acknowledge the comfort of routines • Help them recognize which roles and identities they have routinely assumed • Help them determine if these roles are their own choice, habits, or stemming from unconscious peer pressure • Help them make plans to start over and/or create a new identity based on their goals, strengths, and interests

Remove the tendency to focus on the behavior and attitudes of other people.

You cannot **correct** your mistakes by ~~pointing out~~ the mistakes of others.

It is much easier to focus on the errors of others…

Be a witness,
not a judge.
Focus on yourself,
not on others.
Listen to your heart,
not to the crowd.

..so always bring the students back to their <u>own</u> actions.

Help them determine what they "*would have done instead*", and make sure they can articulate <u>why</u> they would make that choice.

Things OUTSIDE My Control

Other People's Actions

Other People's Mistakes

Other People's Words

Things I CAN Control
My Words ★ My Actions
My Ideas ★ My Play
My Effort ★ My Mistakes
My Behavior

Other People's Feelings

Other People's Play

Other People's Ideas

Other People's Behavior

Younger Students

- Help students avoid over-focus on the behavior of others
- If they see something someone else doing incorrectly, have them create a plan to <u>help</u> that individual, and if appropriate, ignore or avoid the issue until they can get adult help
- Have them vocalize what they would (should) have done in difficult situations. Start with play and then eventually move to daily social issues

Older Students

- Help the student recognize how peers influence their behavior and perceptions
- Have students examine media to understand the subtle ways the outside world is trying to influence their opinion
- Have them make concrete plans to manage problem situations with active engagement and to recognize when avoidance and seeking help would be wise

Oldest Students

- Have students understand the subtle nature of peer influence and how it changes what they say, do, and think
- Have students always identify how their own actions should be changed in difficult situation, even if that action is to avoid, leave, or seek help
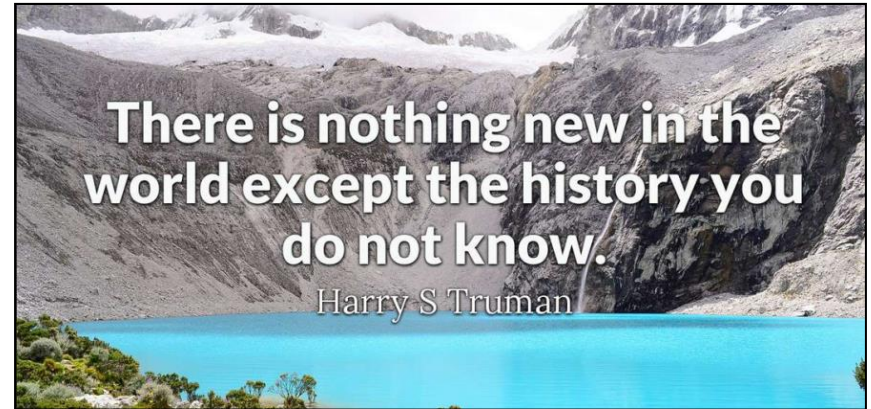- Have students identify situations where it has been difficult to take the above actions

The past can only <u>inform</u> present action.

Make sure any "history" (previous school year, country's history, or world's history) **is remembered** (don't erase or the lesson is lost) **and reviewed in a balanced manner. Help them understand that past norms may differ from current norms.** (I should not judge a kindergartener's behavior using the expected behaviors for a middle school student, the 1500's like this century, etc.)

There is nothing new in the world except the history you do not know.
Harry S Truman

<u>Do NOT</u> focus on a specific variable since every mistake has been duplicated across every classroom, grade, school, sex, race, religion, country, and historical period. Human errors are a function of humanity, so corrections are needed by ALL humanity.

Help students realize that past issues (last week, last year, or for that matter, previous centuries) **cannot be changed. How will they use that information to change <u>THEIR CURRENT</u> behavior?**

IF THE CARDS ARE STACKED AGAINST YOU, RESHUFFLE THE DECK

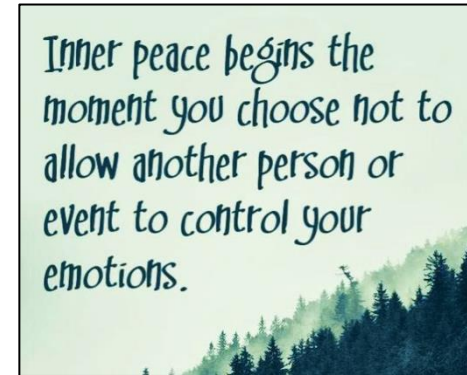| Younger Students	Older Students	Oldest Students
• Have children reflect on their own history, starting first with what they did earlier that morning and eventually working back to the whole day, the previous week, the previous month, and the previous school year • Begin to give students a sense of time, focusing on the evolution of their own friends and family (i.e., parents/caregivers were once children; grandparents were once children, etc.)	• Have the students begin to explore concrete differences in their own past versus how they are done now. Focus on real items like clothing, play, and interests. Restrict at first to the previous year/grade and move from there • Explore how people "did things in the past" versus "today". Again, use concrete items and work backwards in years. Emphasize understanding the norms of that period	• Have students explore beliefs over time. Emphasize similarity in ancient problems and now • Help them realize that judgment of previous times is unfair and could be applied to us in the future. For example, dolphins may be considered "human" in the future. In the year 2400 should your work be erased because you visited an aquarium or did not support dolphin voting rights?

NO ONE CAN "OFFEND ME"
OR "MAKE ME ANGRY"
UNLESS I ALLOW THAT TO HAPPEN
I AM IN CONTROL
OF MY OWN EMOTIONS!

Make it clear that emotions should not be used as an excuse for inappropriate actions...
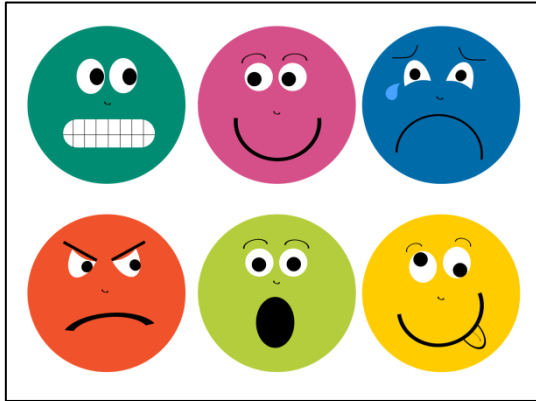
Acknowledge that emotions are real, but do not allow students to use them as an excuse to act inappropriately.

Inner peace begins the moment you choose not to allow another person or event to control your emotions.

Teach students how to ignore and use their experiences (good and bad) to <u>make changes in their own behavior.</u>

Help them use these experiences to learn empathy, recognition of problems, and a catalyst to plan "a different way". Emphasize that adult assistance may be needed to solve/manage some of the issues. No one has the right to hurt them in any way.

| Younger Students	Older Students	Oldest Students
• Help students recognize the basic emotions and the situations that tend to encourage emotional responses • Begin to help them understand how their own actions influence the emotions of others and how to change behavior to encourage positive emotions in peers • Teach students the meaning of the word "ignore", when it should be used, and when they must seek adult help	• Help students move away from using emotions as excuses for actions. Focus on boredom and defeated attitudes about school work and eventually move to jealousy, anger, and other more difficult issues • Help students understand that if peers can control their emotions, they are also in control of you as a person (and your actions). They need to stop that control.	• Have students recognize when their emotions are influencing their behaviors and determine how to change their own attitude. Emphasize the use of ignoring when appropriate • Explore the realities of being their age and the reluctance to admit help is needed. Create plans to obtain help from trusted adults in quiet ways by using coded "I need help" cues and texts

MY EMOTIONS CAN STOP ME FROM THINKING CLEARLY

"If you change the way you look at things, the things you look at change"
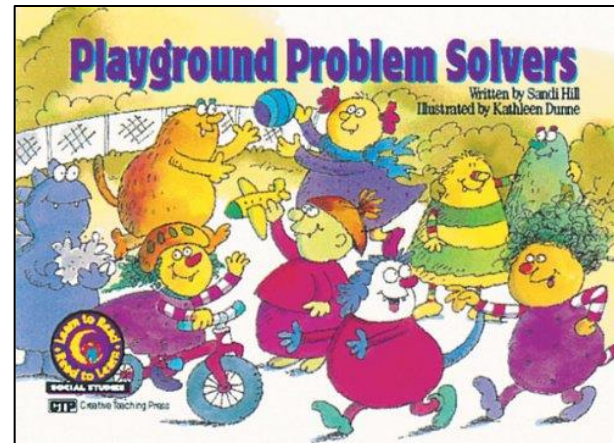~ Wayne Dyer

Teach students the power of perception & attitude…

Teach self-calming techniques.
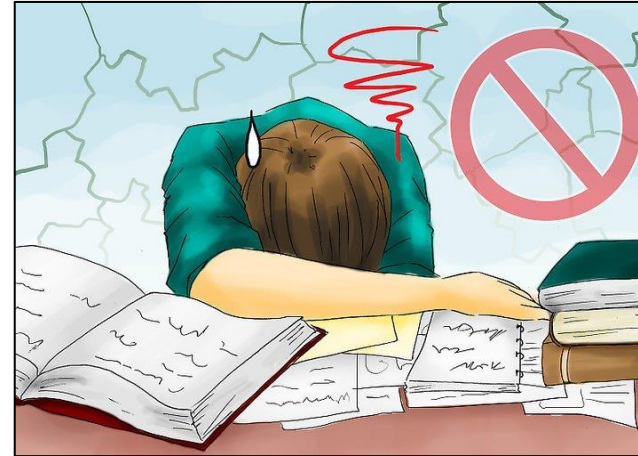
Help students recognize their emotions, motivation levels, and catalyst for certain responses…

…then use reflection/ journal/tracking to monitor progress on changing these patterns and solving issues.

Younger Students	Older Students	Oldest Students
• Help students learn to control emotions (i.e., contain over-excitement, gain a better mood, and eventually, to remove anger responses) • Directly teach age-appropriate stress reduction techniques and how to regain focus when distracted. Emphasize that the emotion is not "wrong" but that does not mean it should be allowed to influence behavior or color overall attitude	• Directly teach the word "perception" and use stories and class situations to help them switch point-of-views • Help them understand their emotion/attitude as they enter into their day and/or tackle work • Help them apply strategies to influence their perception and modify their attitude. (Start with simple boredom or work avoidance before difficult emotions like anger and jealousy)	• Directly teach students emotional management strategies such as visualization, and deep breathing • Help students anticipate the situations that impact their attitude (disliked work, beginning of the week, afternoon classes, after long breaks, after a sports loss, etc.) and make concrete plans to manage them • Have them track how a "change in attitude" changed the outcome

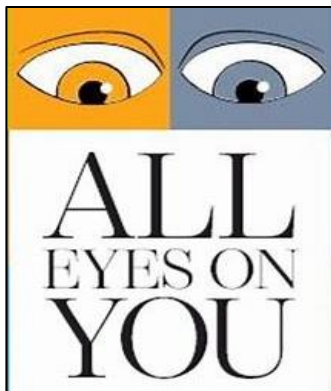IF I WANT OTHERS TO FORGIVE AND FORGET MY MISTAKES, I MUST BE WILLING TO DO THE SAME IN RETURN

Remove the tendency to shame, criticize, or publicly shun others...

Teach how to "help" someone else to change their actions...

Never look down on someone unless you are helping them up

...and emphasize which "forms of help" do more harm than good.

Teach the wonderful power (but also damage) inherent in public responses.

Younger Students	**Older Students**	**Oldest Students**
• Assist students with helping others during natural, non-emotional situations	• Have students recognize what causes them to avoid asking for help	• Help students transfer group attitudes that are directed against others to their own lives
• Help students recognize when a student needs help but has not directly signaled that need	• Help students recognize the emotions that cause them to reject help when it is offered	• Have them identify people who may be feeling marginalized
• Help understand understand the power "the group" to both help and hurt	• Superimpose that attitude on helping a younger student with a simple, non-emotional task (i.e., carrying too many objects)	• Have them make a concrete plan to bring that person "into the group" or to show "appreciation for that person"
• Have them make a concrete plan as a group to help someone (make sure there is direct contact so they can see the result)	• Help them plan ways to make others, and eventually themselves, more comfortable with "getting help"	• Help them recognize the fears, emotions, and group pressures that cause them to avoid the above activities

IF I EMOTIONALLY HARM OTHERS, I AM A BULLY. IF I USE SOCIAL MEDIA TO SPREAD THIS MESSAGE, I AM A GANG LEADER

Teach the ability to discern when good intentions are actually harming other people...
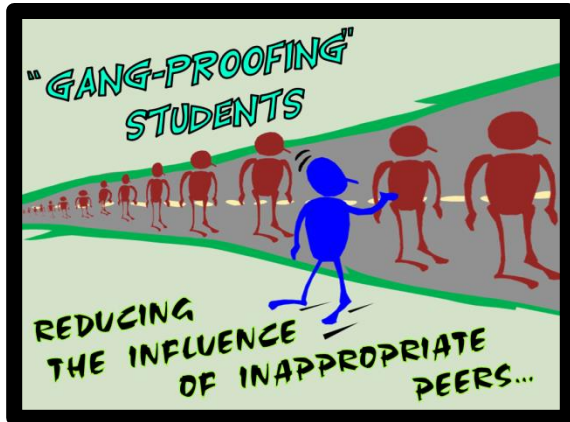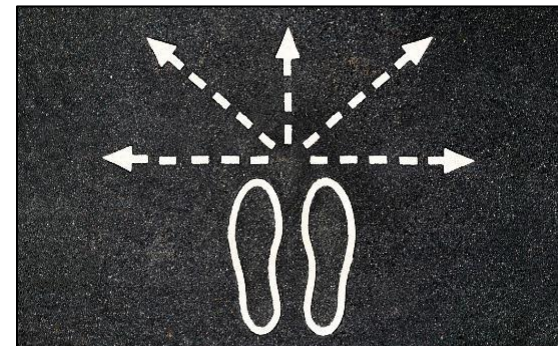

Teach students about peer influence...

..including its modern (expanded) meaning in today's media-driven world.

Encourage them to recognize when admired social leaders cross this line...

...and which responses would have been better so they have a personal plan.

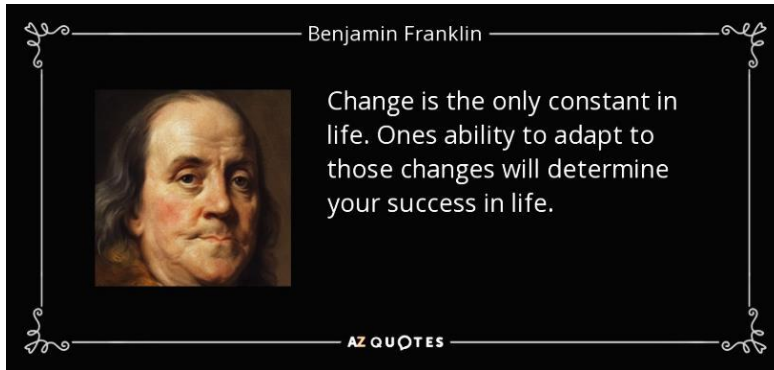| Younger Students	Older Students	Oldest Students
• Help children recognize when someone hurts them both physically and emotionally, including making them afraid or shy • Help them transfer this knowledge to how their own actions can hurt others, even if they were trying to "help" • Have them practice creating two or three ways to "respond" to the situation and choose the one that will not cause harm	• Explore how even quiet actions (i.e., ignoring, snickering, strange looks, etc.) can cause harm to others • Explore how social media can be used to cause harm, including encouraging others to "gang up" on someone, especially about looks, personal beliefs, or values • Explore prominent and popular figures who have crossed the line and are hurting others using media	• Explore how peer pressure influences thought and/or encourages silence when beliefs or looks do not follow the norm • Help students discern when their overt actions or use of media have caused direct or indirect harm • Helps students understand how their silence in the face of this observed harm can cause just as much damage as overt action

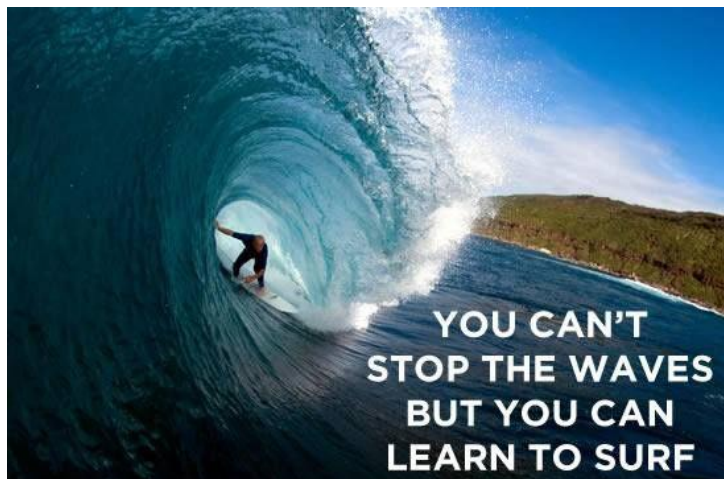# CHANGE MAY BE GOOD, AND IT MAY BE BAD. . . REGARDLESS, IT IS

Teach students to accept and tolerate change...

Change is the only constant in life. Ones ability to adapt to those changes will determine your success in life.

— Benjamin Franklin

Change cannot be avoided and may be uncomfortable for both you...

...and others around you!

YOU CAN'T STOP THE WAVES BUT YOU CAN LEARN TO SURF

Systematically help students learn to cope with unexpected change.

| Younger Students	Older Students	Oldest Students
• Help students to learn simple routines and "ways of doing things" • Then help the students to accept variations and changes, including ones that are not necessarily desirable (i.e., creating an event and then artificially delaying it) • Note and assist students who struggle with change, including those who must always play in the same area and/or who are always using the same play scenarios	• Help students reflect on changes they have experienced over the last two years and categorize them as good or difficult • Have them go back and think of "positives" that came out of the difficult changes, even if the only thing gained is resilience or strength • Artificially construct change situations and help them cope with the disappointment	• Have students reflect on the dreams they had for various life events and how the reality differed from those dreams • Help them determine some good aspects that stemmed from those disappointments • Have them reflect on the hopes and plans they have for the near future school and how variables might change them • Help students plan on how to manage these changes

IF I CAN'T FIND SOMETHING TO BE JOYFUL ABOUT, I'M NOT LOOKING HARD ENOUGH. . .
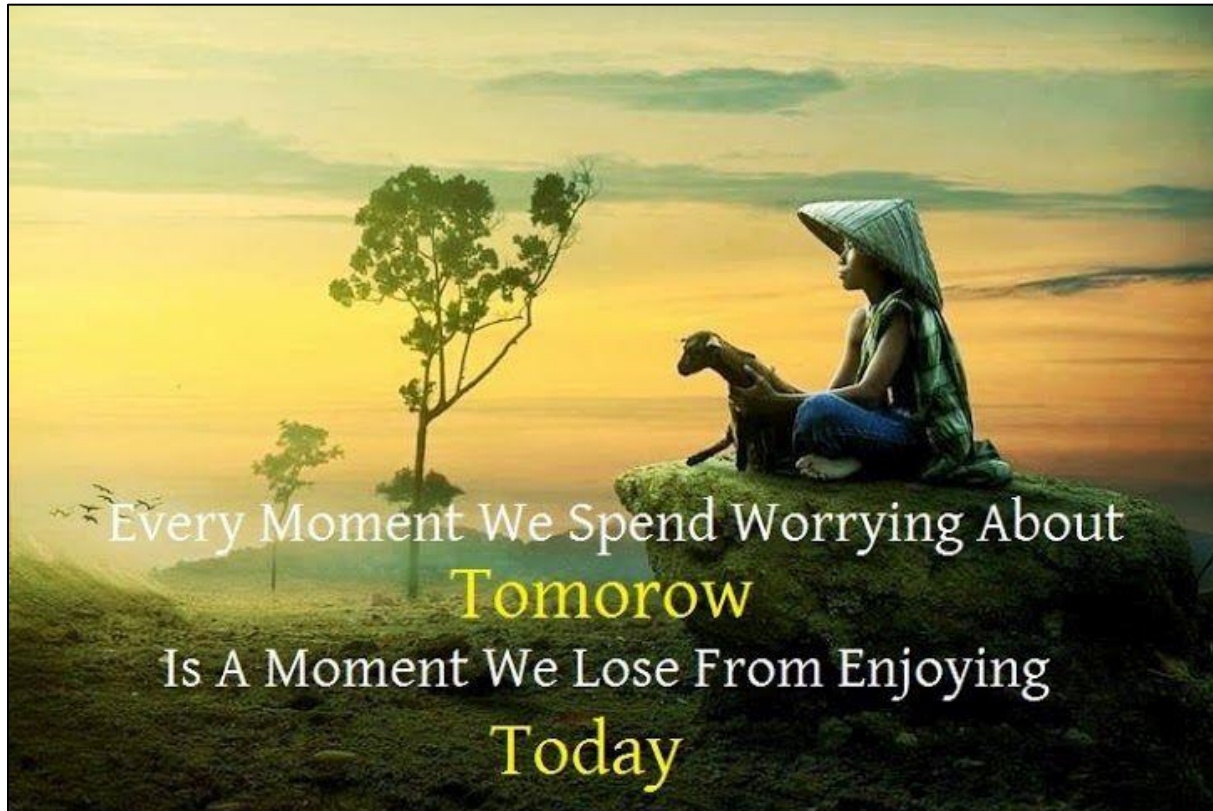
Every Moment We Spend Worrying About Tomorow Is A Moment We Lose From Enjoying Today

Teach students to recognize and appreciate the wonderful things that are part of their daily life…
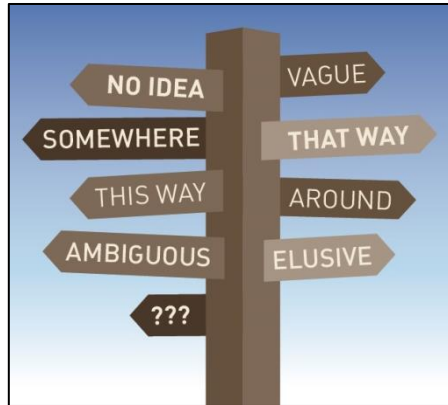
Help students appreciate daily (short-term) progress…

…their long-term progress (behavior, emotions, academics, etc.)

You can be angry for what you don't have, or thankful for what you do have.
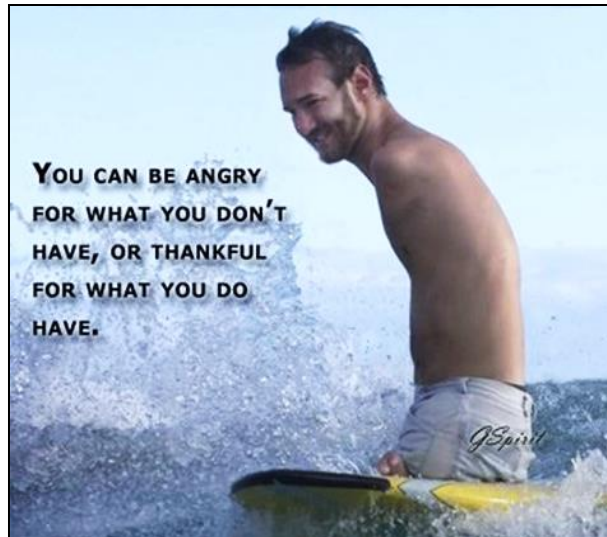
Encourage awareness and appreciation for **all aspects** of life, especially the aspects that we tend to take for granted.

| Younger Students	Older Students	Oldest Students
• Help students recognize the daily events in their life that are easily discernible as positive • Encourage them to begin to think about daily life realities that are also good (i.e., being able to smell snack, being able to run in the gross motor room, etc.) • Help the students reflect on some of their plans and celebrate the good things that have occurred, even if it is only effort, not progress	• Continue to help students reflect on the good things in life, including the less obvious, like getting a chance to work hard on homework • Help them reflect on the progress they are making to manage personal issues, make changes (make sure to include non-academics like the arts, sports, and interests) • Have them begin to journal these "positives"	• Encourage students to reflect on how their lives benefit from their home condition and or time period in history. (assist students who have fewer life positives to find wonderful variables) • Encourage students to recognize progress towards goals and personal plans (make sure to widen this reflection to non-academics, personal interests, and career goals)

MY PERSPECTIVE CHANGES EVERYTHING SO I MUST LEARN TO CONTROL IT

Help students gain perspective of time and space without losing the importance of "self"
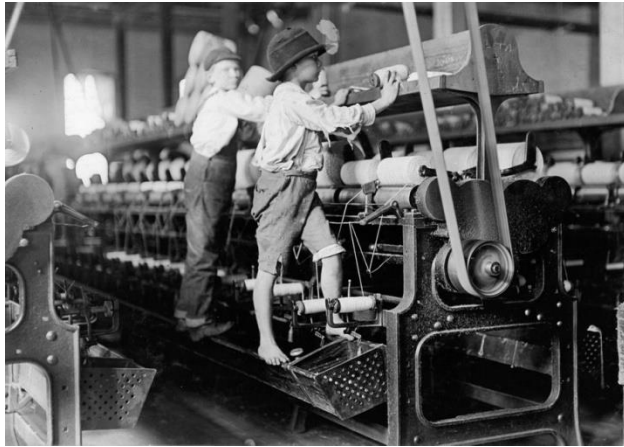
Teach age-appropriate realities of history...
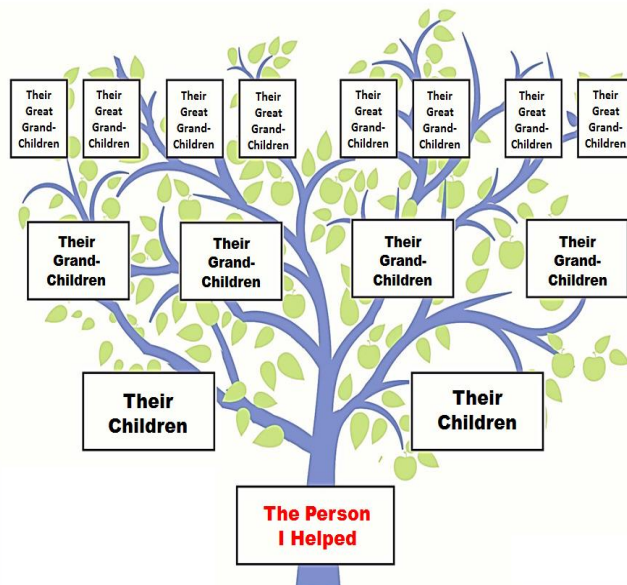
Alaska has more than three million lakes over 20 acres in size.

Antarctica has as much ice as the Atlantic Ocean has water.

Assuming population density of NY, the earth's ~7.8 billion people could fit in the state of Texas! If they stood shoulder-to-shoulder, they could all fit in the 500 square miles of L.A.

The deepest lake is in the former USSR (Lake Baikal), and it's 400 mile width and mile-deep depth could hold all five of the next largest lakes (The Great Lakes).

Just the Pacific ocean alone is 162 million square miles. (frame of reference: Texas has 266,874 square miles)

The Sahara Desert has a surface area of about 3.5 million square miles. (roughly 1/3 of the U.S.). The rain forest covers 3 million.

...and the vastness of the world to enhance their ability to put issues into perspective

During this process, do not lose the importance of self, the power of personal action, or negate the influence they can exert on the world ---even if it impacts only on one person at a time.

Younger Students	Older Students	Oldest Students
• Help children to explore the communities in their location (i.e., other classrooms, personnel they rarely meet, etc.) • Help them learn about real-life community members in a direct and concrete manner through service projects (make sure to describe the person's location using comparisons they will understand---i.e., it would take them two whole free play periods to get there)	• Help students begin to understand the size of their city and eventually their state. Only introduce the size of the nation when ready, to avoid confusion • Use concrete comparisons of distance so students do not respond with fear to issues like harm to the rain forest • Encourage them to "change the world" through their response to the people and locations around them	• Help students understand the size and dimensions of earth and space • Help them understand history and how humans repeat some errors in each era • Provide diverse models of people who "changed the world" • Have students reflect on the one person who changed their life • Encourage them to be that "one person" for someone else

LEADERS MUST BE DIFFERENT

Break the habit of blind conformity with a group...

Help students understand that blending into the group is comfortable because they can hide...

...and making a different choice (wanting to stand out) will put them in the spotlight and could result in discomfort.

If they want to be the best, make a difference, be in control, and make their own choices, sometimes they will need to step away from the crowd.

Do not choose to be wrong for the sake of being different.

(Herbert Louis Samuel)

Avoid making "being different" a goal in itself—it must have a legitimate purpose.

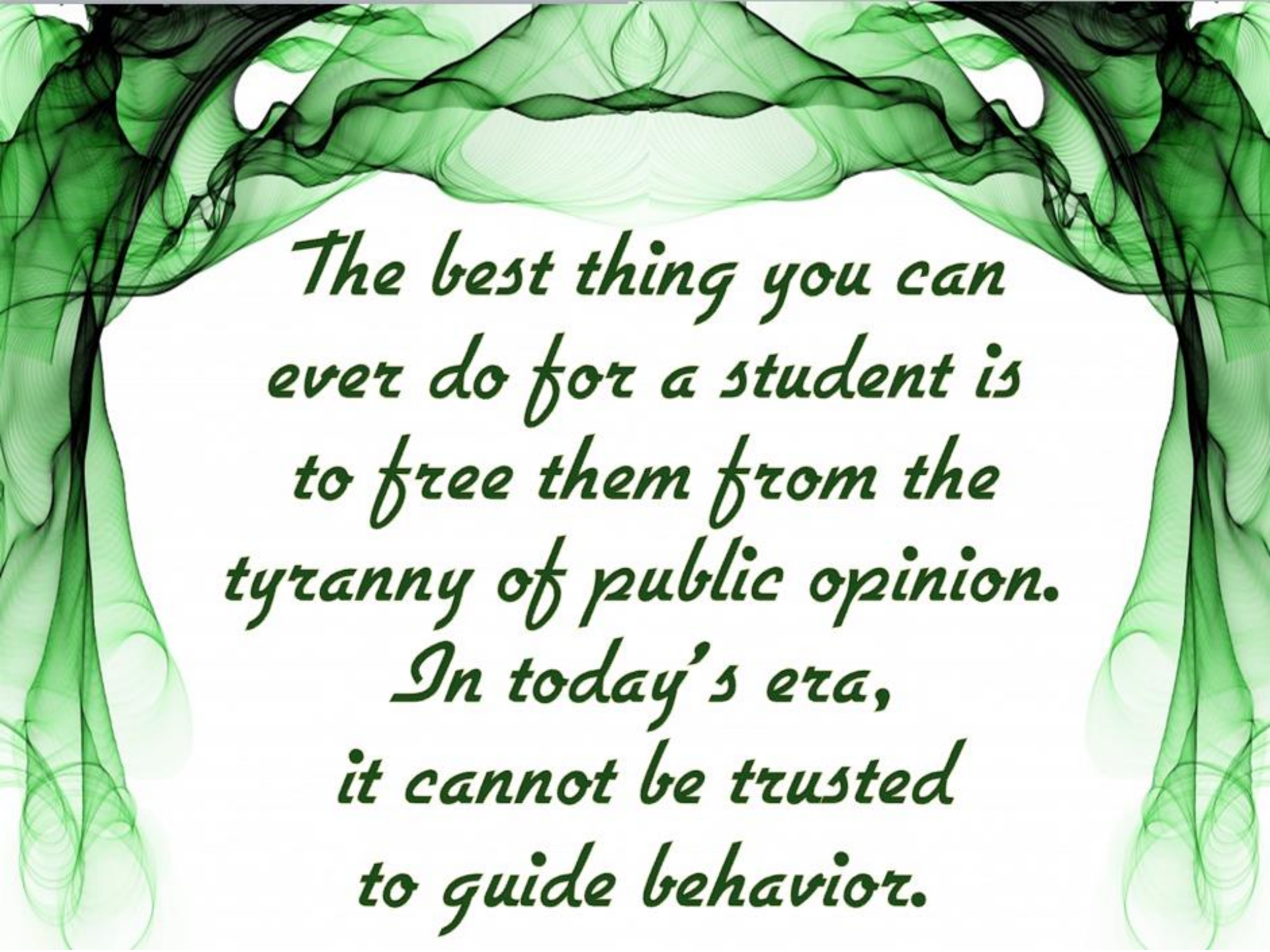| Younger Students	Older Students	Oldest Students
• Have students make choices and give a reason for that choice • Create situations with a very wide range of choices that are eliminated as they are selected. Have students come up with a reason for their choice despite this restriction • Recognize students that are doing something different from others • Watch for "say the same thing" events when children answer and encourage variation	• Have students reflect on the good and bad associated with "doing what everyone else is doing" • Have them reflect on the good and bad of "being different". • Help them understand that neither is the best way. It depends on why that way was chosen • Help them begin to define a "leader" as someone who must stands out from the crowd, by default	• Have students reflect on how peers and media encourages group conformity • Examine media that encourages "group think" • Have them reflect on how celebrities were noticed because they "stood out" • Help them realize these leaders succeeded by being "different" but often turn around and encourage/demand group conformity on social media

The best thing you can ever do for a student is to free them from the tyranny of public opinion. In today's era, it cannot be trusted to guide behavior.