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What tethers us to ineffectiveness and low morale in education?

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*"What's that foul odor coming from the middle school?"*

Never sacrifice sound pedagogy because someone above you isn't there yet.

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In some schools, there is a pervading, anti-intellectual bias.

[Note: Ask Rick for article on how to cultivate teacher intellect]

Averaging and the 100-point scale	"Physics envy" when looking at education research	Teachers as the sole arbiters of all there is to know
Staying quiet when education pundits/bullies distort the truth	Succumbing to Intellectual Bias	Lack of focus on teacher wellness
Denying student access to personal technology	Classrooms without periodic movement	Removing students from fine/performing arts and p.e. in order to spend more time on state exam preparation
Assuming that just because students are in the middle of high school, they know how to read	Thinking we have to replicate learning conditions in later classes in order to prepare them for those classes	Conveyor Belt of Schooling by age, unwavering adherence to pacing guides and "fidelity" to a scripted program
Not being creative because it makes others look bad		Honor Roll
		Making Middle Schools junior versions of high school

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Schools aren't meant to meet the needs of diverse students.

'Anyone out there know me?'

It is counter-cultural, subversive, to differentiate instruction, you radicals.

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Be careful – Grit and growth mindset programs and emphases can be racist, classist, and more. Check out, "Grit and Growth Mindset – Deficit Thinking?" (AMLE Magazine)

[www.rickwormeli.com/articles](http://www.rickwormeli.com/articles)

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"Courage is not the absence of fear. It's the judgment that something else is more important than that fear."

-- Ambrose Redmoon

**In the room the women come and go  
Talking of Michelangelo...  
...Do I dare disturb the universe?**

- T.S. Elliot, The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock, 1915

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**We are hired for how we are similar to a company or organization, but we advance based on how we are different.**

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**What goes unachieved in students because we chose to be politically safe?**

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Success in the classroom is not so much following a list of recipes in your teacher cookbook as it is paying diligent attention to constructive mindsets (dispositions) and the influences our inherited narratives.

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"It's not what you don't know that gets you into trouble, it's what you know for sure that ain't so."  
- Mark Twain

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#### Micro-aggressions

"Microaggressions are the everyday verbal, nonverbal, and environmental slights, snubs, or insults, whether intentional or unintentional, which communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative messages to target persons based solely upon their marginalized group membership...[7]hese hidden messages may invalidate the group identity or experiential reality of target persons, demean them on a personal or group level, communicate they are lesser human beings, suggest they do not belong with the majority group, threaten and intimidate, or relegate them to inferior status and treatment...microaggressions are active manifestations...of our worldviews of inclusion/exclusion, superiority/inferiority, normality/abnormality, and desirability/undesirability."

— Derald Wing Sue Ph.D., Columbia University,  
[www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/microaggressions-in-everyday-life/201011/microaggressions-more-just-race](http://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/microaggressions-in-everyday-life/201011/microaggressions-more-just-race)

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#### Micro-aggressions

"The most detrimental forms of microaggressions are usually delivered by well-intentioned individuals who are unaware that they have engaged in harmful conduct toward a socially devalued group...[7]one of us are immune from inheriting the racial, gender, and sexual orientation biases of our society. We have been socialized into racist, sexist and heterosexist attitudes, beliefs and behaviors. Much of this is outside the level of conscious awareness, thus we engage in actions that unintentionally oppress and discriminate against others."

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The photo samples of microaggressions found on the next three slides can be found here:

[www.buzzfeed.com/hnigatu/racial-microaggressions-you-hear-on-a-daily-basis](http://www.buzzfeed.com/hnigatu/racial-microaggressions-you-hear-on-a-daily-basis)

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Samples from *Microaggressions in the Classroom*, identified by former students, Joel Portman, Tuyen Trisa Bui and Javier Ogaz; and Dr Jesús Treviño, former Associate Provost for Multicultural Excellence at the University of Denver, Center for Multicultural Excellence ([www.messiah.edu/download/downloads/id/921/Microaggressions\\_in\\_the\\_Classroom.pdf](http://www.messiah.edu/download/downloads/id/921/Microaggressions_in_the_Classroom.pdf)):

- Failing to learn to pronounce or continuing to mispronounce the names of students after they have corrected you.
- Scheduling tests and project due dates on religious or cultural holidays.
- Setting low expectations for students from particular groups, neighborhoods
- Calling on, engaging, and validating one gender, class, or race of students while ignoring other students during class.
- Assigning student tasks or roles that reinforce particular gender roles or don't allow all students flexibility across roles and responses.
- Anticipating students' emotional responses based on gender, sexual orientation, race, or ethnicity.
- Using inappropriate humor in class that degrades students from different groups.
- Using the term "illegals" to reference undocumented students.

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- Denying the experiences of students by questioning the credibility and validity of their stories.
- Using sexist language.
- Continuing to misuse pronouns even after a student, transgender or not, indicates their preferred gender pronoun.
- Assigning projects that ignore differences in socioeconomic class status and inadvertently penalize students with fewer financial resources.
- Assuming all students have access to and are proficient in the use of computers and applications for communications about school activities and academic work.
- Complimenting non-white students on their use of "good English."
- Featuring pictures of students of only one ethnicity or gender on the school website.
- Having students engage in required reading where the protagonists are always white.

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- "They may be a little late to our meeting – They are on Mexican time, if you know what I mean."
- "Heck yeah, those Asians have hacked every one of America's computers. 'Can't trust them."
- "Speak English. This is America!"
- "I wasn't being racist. That's just how they interpreted it. I can't help that."
- "Would you please get your people to join in more more?"
- "I don't like going to this school. I don't see anyone like me there."

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- "See? I speak their language: I told them, "No MSG!"
- "They're just having babies to get on welfare and not have to work."
- "What are you, some kind of Tiger Mom?"
- "Well, they don't speak English, so they really can't be volunteers for this committee."
- "I just don't know what to say to those people, so I don't talk with them."
- "Muslim, Hindu – They're all the same!"
- "It's easier to teach my way and make them adapt. Besides, this is prepares them for the America."

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**Micro-aggressions Resources**

- *Racial Microaggressions in Everyday Life: Race, Gender, and Sexual Orientation*
- *Microaggressions and Marginality: Manifestation, Dynamics and Impact*
- [www.buzzfeed.com/hnigatu/racial-microaggressions-you-hear-on-a-daily-basis](http://www.buzzfeed.com/hnigatu/racial-microaggressions-you-hear-on-a-daily-basis)
- [www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/microaggressions-in-everyday-life/201011/microaggressions-more-just-race](http://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/microaggressions-in-everyday-life/201011/microaggressions-more-just-race)
- [www.usatoday.com/story/news/2018/02/28/what-microaggressions-small-slights-serious-consequences/362754002/](http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/2018/02/28/what-microaggressions-small-slights-serious-consequences/362754002/)
- [www.messiah.edu/download/downloads/921/Microaggressions\\_in\\_the\\_Classroom.pdf](http://www.messiah.edu/download/downloads/921/Microaggressions_in_the_Classroom.pdf)

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Absent moral imperative, nothing in education changes.  
(Reeves)

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What's the moral thing we do?

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In order for someone to accept feedback or  
take a risk with a new idea,  
he must admit first that what he was doing  
was less effective than his ego thought it was.

**Working Premise:**

**Examined pedagogy  
elevates;  
students thrive.**

**Unexamined  
pedagogy harms;  
students whither.**

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“[People]...cannot accept even the simplest and most obvious truth if it ...would oblige them to admit the falsity of conclusions which they have delighted in explaining to colleagues, which they have proudly taught to others, and which they have woven, thread by thread, into the fabric of their lives.”  
(Gleick, 1987, p. 38)” – Evans, p. 30

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“People must be sufficiently dissatisfied with the present state of affairs – and their role in maintaining it – or they have no reason to endure the losses and challenges of change.” - Evans, p. 57

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“The humiliation of becoming a raw novice at a new trade after having been a master craftsman at an old one, and...the deep crisis caused by the need to suppress ancient prejudices, to put aside the comfort of the familiar to relinquish the security of what one knows well.” (Kaufman, 1971, p. 13)” - Evans, p. 48

“The Grief of Accepting New Ideas” - [www.rickwormeli.com/articles](http://www.rickwormeli.com/articles)

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**Time is NOT immutable.**





**Active Creators,  
NOT Passive Consumers!**

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**Fair Isn't  
Always Equal**

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**There is no  
such thing  
as laziness.**

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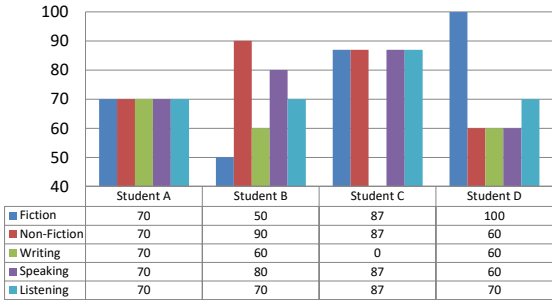
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**Re-Do's & Re-Takes with students and their teachers: Are They Okay?**

More than "okay!" After 10,000 tries, here's a working light bulb. 'Any questions?

**Thomas Edison**

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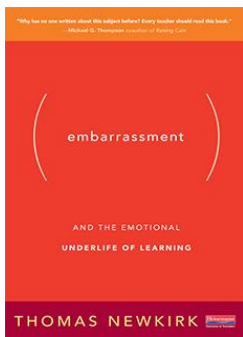
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'Highly recommended new book, 'worthy of a book study - One of the most impactful books on teaching I've read in years.

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Our future depends on  
this one here.



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*"A student is not an interruption of our work...the student is the purpose of it. We are not doing a favor by serving the student...the student is doing us a favor by giving us the opportunity to do so."*

– William W. Purkey from an L.L. Bean Co. poster:  
"What is a customer?" by J.M. Eaton

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**'Bold Actions that Happen  
When We are Brave Together:**

- Build in mechanisms to deviate from the teaching plan if you can improve the learning over that which otherwise might be achieved.
- Remove Honor Roll. It has little to do with students' academic achievement and personal maturation.
- End the use of the 100-point scale.
- Get trained in gifted education so we can meet advanced students' needs in regular education classrooms, if necessary.
- Articulate our pedagogy, and invite its critique.
- Pushback on anti-intellectualism in the profession.
- Audit our gradebooks and school grading policies in light of ethical, accurate grading practices.

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- Turn middle schools into true middle schools, not junior versions of the upper school.
- Walk side by side with a student who makes a mistake – moral or immoral -- rather than label him permanently and assume the label builds moral fiber.
- Teach in the ways students best learn, regardless of whether or not it's the way we best learn.
- Speak up about schools and good teaching at community events; confront education bullies and pundits who spread myths and misconceptions.
- Invite discussions of morality and ethics in your grading and teaching conversations.

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- Participate in the national/international conversations of our field. Develop a Personal/Professional Learning Network (PLN), contribute to it, make yourself open to its ideas.
- Conduct serious, extended, uncomfortable, candid conversations about poverty, racism, classism, cultural bias, school violence, and other societal concerns and their impact on student performance.
- Take steps to resolve the growing disparities between the have's and have-not's: Actively change/remove policies, structures, practices that marginalize any culture, ethnicity, or economic class

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- Accept the fact that schooling is not limited to learning job skills so they can contribute to our economy. Ultimately, it's about passion and meaning-making.
- Embrace the very real positive effects of fiction reading on critical-thinking, scholarly analysis, problem-solving, empathy, and civil discourse.
- Record feedback on students' work NOT to justify a grade, but to cultivate real learning in the student.
- Give up being the oracle and arbiter of all knowledge. Perceive lessons as launching pads for students own pursuits, not collections to be stacked and retrieved later.

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- Conduct professional development, feedback, evaluation, and collegial relationships in the manner in which we want teachers to do it for students.
- Become something more than a "clicktivist" when it comes to civil and educational challenges.
- Accept a teaching or leadership position in a *low* performing school.
- Accept a teaching or leadership position in a *high* performing school.
- Make it the policy that we cannot take students out of P.E., fine/performing arts, and tech classes to double-up on remediation for exams.
- Cultivate hope.

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***Let's challenge students to honor their civic values and basic decency:***

- If she becomes a lawyer, ask her to spend time doing legal aid work for those who cannot afford proper representation.
- If she becomes a doctor, ask her to volunteer some time to do rotations in hospitals where there is little equipment and even less hope.
- If he becomes a professional athlete, ask him to volunteer to coach in children's sports leagues in impoverished areas.
- If he becomes a financial planner, ask him to offer some free classes to families who are struggling to find their way.
- If he ends up homeless, invite him to volunteer to build homes for others.

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**"I used to think..., but now I think..."**

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*As highly accomplished  
professional educators,  
let's be courageous advocates  
of diverse students, even in  
politically tough times...*

*- and let's help others do  
the same.*

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