

What Keeps Teachers Going?
What Keeps Teachers
Developing?

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Outline of Presentation

1. Why teachers go into teaching
2. Why teachers drop out
3. Why teachers stay
4. Why teachers not only stay, but actively keep developing
5. How to keep our batteries charged

How about you?

- Why did you go into teaching?
- What sometimes makes you think of leaving the profession?
- Why have you stayed in the profession?

Graphic Organizer

What I know / want to know	What I learned
1. 2. 3. 4. 5.	1. 2. 3. 4. 5.

Why teachers go into teaching

- Practical or external reasons
- Personality type
- Passion

§ “People are called to teaching because they love children and youth, or because they love being with them, watching them open up and grow and become more able, more competent, more powerful in the world. They may love what happens to themselves when they are with children, the ways in which they become their best selves. Or they become teachers because they love the world or some piece of the world enough that they want to show that love to others. In either case, people teach as an act of construction and reconstruction and as a gift of oneself to others. I teach in the hope of making the world a better place.”

Ayers, W. (1993). To Teach: The Journey of a Teacher.

“To be a passionate teacher is to be someone in love with a field of knowledge, deeply stirred by issues and ideas that challenge our world, drawn to the dilemmas and potentials of the young people who come into class each day – or captivated by all of these. A passionate teacher is a teacher who breaks out of the isolation of a classroom, who refuses to submit to apathy or cynicism. only when teachers bring their passions about learning and about life into their daily work can they dispel the fog of passive compliance or active disinterest that surrounds so many students. I believe that we all have it within ourselves to be passionate teachers, and that nothing else will quite do the trick.”

Fried, R.L. (1995). *The Passionate Teacher*

Why teachers drop out

Burnout is a syndrome of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and a reduced sense of personal accomplishment. It culminates in a build-up of negative feelings about our students, colleagues and administration. As motivation decreases and frustration increases, we lose the desire and energy to be creative, developing teachers. Physical and emotional stress play on self-esteem as we lose the sense of being in charge of our lives.

Maslach, C. (2003). *Burnout: The Cost of Caring*.

Sources of burnout

- Involvement with people
- The particular job and its environment
- The personal characteristics of those of us who choose the helping professions.

“Teaching is not a lost art, but the regard for it is a lost tradition.”

Barzun, J. (1945). *Teacher in America*.

What undermines the energy and vitality of our teachers?

- We feel underappreciated.
- We feel undermined.
- We feel overwhelmed.
- We feel isolated.
- We feel vulnerable.

Intrator, S. (2002). *Stories of the Courage to Teach: Honoring the Teacher's Heart*.

Why do teachers stay in teaching?

Why do teachers stay in teaching?

- Peer support
- Early rewards
- Student success

Student success is dependent on the teacher's:

- Congruence
- Unconditional positive regard
- Empathy

Students whose teachers were high in congruence, positive regard and empathy:

- Missed fewer days at school
- Had increased scores on measures of self-concept
- Made greater gains on academic achievement measures
- Presented fewer disciplinary problems
- Were more spontaneous
- Used higher levels of thinking

Traits of successful teachers of culturally and linguistically diverse students

- Are among the most experienced teachers
- Place a high value on students' identities
- Connect learning to students' lives
- Have high expectations for all students
- Stay committed to students
- Create a safe haven for learning
- Use active learning strategies

- View parents and other community members as partners in education
- Dare to challenge the bureaucracy of the school and district
- Are resilient in the face of difficult situations
- Are willing and eager to experiment
- View themselves as lifelong learners
- Care about, respect and love their students

Nieto, S. (2003). *What Keeps Teachers Going?*

Why do teachers stay in teaching?

- Peer support
- Early rewards
- Student success
- Knowing the subject matters
- Intellectual challenge
- The life of a teacher
- Hope, optimism, faith
- Empowering experiences working within an educational system
- Variety and opportunities for risk taking

§ “Passionate teachers are always taking risks, and they make at least as many mistakes as anybody else (probably more than most). What’s different is how they react to their mistakes: they choose to acknowledge and learn from them, rather than to ignore or deny them. Thus, they help make the classroom a safer place for students to make their own mistakes and learn from them.”

Fried, R.L. (1995). *The Passionate Teacher*.

Why teachers not only stay in
teaching, but actively keep
developing

"Nothing in the world can take the place of persistence. Talent will not; nothing is more common than unsuccessful men with talent. Genius will not; unrewarded genius is almost a proverb. Education will not; the world is full of educated derelicts. Persistence and determination alone are omnipotent. The slogan, 'press on' has solved, and always will solve, the problems of the human race."

Calvin Coolidge

Why teachers not only stay in teaching, but actively keep developing

1. Growing with colleagues

Why teachers not only stay in teaching, but actively keep developing

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2. A commitment and joy in lifelong learning

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3. Making opportunities for reflection

Why teachers not only stay in teaching, but actively keep developing

1. Growing with colleagues
2. A commitment and joy in lifelong learning
3. Making opportunities for reflection
4. Intellectual satisfaction

“The secret of Life is to have a task, something you devote your entire life to, something you bring everything to ... and the most important thing is – it must be something you cannot possibly do!”

Henry Moore

Why teachers not only stay in teaching, but actively keep developing

1. Growing with colleagues
2. A commitment and joy in lifelong learning
3. Making opportunities for reflection
4. Intellectual satisfaction
5. Respect and belief in our students

§ “Teachers at every level walk into their classrooms and literally close the door on their work, isolating themselves in ways that make collegial connections unlikely. Of course, self-isolation takes a great personal toll. But when teachers reach out, they find themselves less lonely, less afraid, less exhausted, less bored, and more alive. And the fruits of reaching out are professional as well as personal; a teacher who connects more deeply with students and colleagues is likely to find his or her work life transformed. Connecting with the need of our students leads us to challenge all the ways in which ‘business as usual’ fails to serve them well. Connecting with our colleagues gives us the collective courage necessary to make our teaching less responsive to arbitrary rules and more responsive to the truth of our students’ lives.”

Parker Palmer

Why teachers not only stay in teaching, but actively keep developing

1. Growing with colleagues
2. A commitment and joy in lifelong learning
3. Making opportunities for reflection
4. Intellectual satisfaction
5. Respect and belief in our students
6. Congruence, presence

Implications for Us: How can we
keep our batteries charged?

S - T - R - E - S - S

Ready

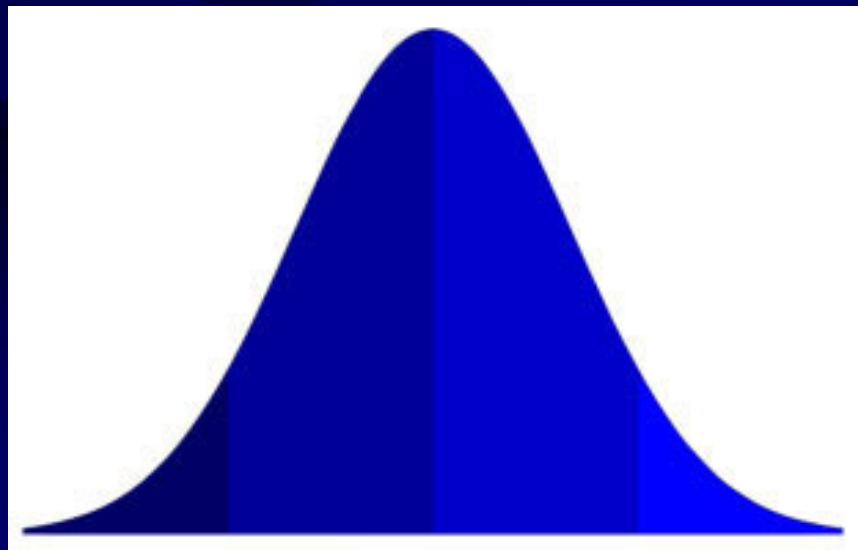
Energized

Tense

Sleepy

Struggling

Soporiphic



What does burnout look/feel like for you?

Physical	Mental
Behavioral	Emotional

What are your current methods for dealing with burnout?

<u>Active mental / physical expression</u>	<u>Self-nurturance</u>
<u>Emotional expression</u>	<u>Confronting the stressor</u>

Constructive approaches to coping with burnout

- Working smarter instead of working harder
- Setting specific, realistic goals rather than noble, abstract ones
- Doing the same thing differently, while changing what can be changed
- Breaking away
- Taking things less personally

Constructive approaches to coping with burnout

- Accentuating the positive
- ‘Knowing thyself’
- Rest and relaxation techniques
- Making a real transition between work and home each day
- A life of one’s own
- And, when necessary, changing jobs.

Maslach, C. (2003). *Burnout: The Cost of Caring*.

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