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CORWIN

Please enjoy this complimentary excerpt from "When I Started Teaching, I Wish I Had Known...".

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How to Use This Book

The obvious way to use this book is to read each week's entry in order and reflect on its wisdom to see how it relates to your growth as a teacher. But if you are anything like me, you might want to skip to the end and peek to see what is ahead for you. You may even want to read all of the management ideas sprinkled throughout the book because that is what you need right now.

This is your book of wisdom, and you can use it the way that best supports you. What I do highly recommend is that you schedule your *Weekly Wisdom* into your regular weekly planning time. You want time to read and reflect on what might be useful to you each week. I also encourage you to review the bios and photos of each teacher on the companion website to acknowledge their contribution to your journey.

HOW WEEKLY WISDOM IS ORGANIZED

School years have cycles and rhythms that relate to activities or content knowledge to be taught. I like to think of them as seasons. This book is organized into weeks and grouped into sections by seasons. These are not strict boundaries by any means—just a way to think about the wisdom in an organized way through the cycle of a school year.

Weeks 1–8

Getting Started ~ Create a Community of Learners

Weeks 9–16

Gaining Momentum ~ Find Your Strengths

Weeks 17–30

Staying in the Flow ~ Focus on Teaching and Learning

Weeks 31–36

Closing the School Year With Intention ~ Celebrate Your Growth

WHAT TO EXPECT EACH WEEK

Within each week, you will find four types of wisdom from a featured teacher to take in, explore, and practice: a story, a management tip, a self-care message, and an affirmation.

The Story

As you read the stories, I invite you to be open to the big ideas the teacher is sharing. It doesn't matter if it is not about your age group or subject area. Listen for the key message: how this teacher learned how to be successful. In my story above, a key message was this: *You bring your skills, your years of teaching experience, and your passion for teaching to this moment. Use your strengths.*

After you read each story, you will have an opportunity to “Pause. Reflect. Act.” This is a signal for you to use your insight and your wisdom to think about how this message is useful to you. You may want to keep a journal or use the journal on the companion website to jot down your thoughts. This writing will be useful to you at the end of the year when you look back to see how much you have grown.

The Management Tip

This is where you will find practical wisdom for the classroom. The research says that most teachers say they need to know a lot more about MANAGEMENT! Time management, classroom routines and rituals, and ways to manage student behavior issues. So, each week you will read the teacher's suggestion for you in one of those three management areas. Here is an example:

How to Manage Student Papers

Here is one of my best time management tips for collecting assignments from students. Assign a number to each student in my classroom. The number relates to the alphabetical order of students in my grade book. Before students pass in any written assignment, they put their "number" in the upper right corner along with their name. A student leader collects the papers and puts them in numerical order for me, so I can easily enter the completed assignment in my grade book. If a number is missing, we can see if that student is absent or just forgot to hand in the assignment. A sticky note on the top sheet lists any missing numbers for easy follow-up with students when they return to school. It's an easy and efficient way to collect papers, record grades quickly, and see which students were absent.

The Self-Care Message

Featured teachers will also share how they take time for themselves so that school doesn't become so overwhelming. You may already do some

of these things, and some ideas may be new to you. The message is for you to do something that resonates with you. The goal is for you to find ways outside of schoolwork to live and enjoy. Many of us “love” being teachers and find that working more and harder is just what we do. But we all know that is a recipe for disaster when the challenges get more intense and we don’t have a regular routine in place for detaching from school. Here is an example:

Walk in Nature

One of my favorite activities to calm myself down is to take a forest-bathing walk. The term *forest bathing*, known as *shinrin-yoku* in Japan, is a way to find peace and lower anxiety. I dedicate a specified amount of time to be on a nature path near my home. The goal is not exercise but to take in the sights, sounds, and smells of the forest through our senses. Forest therapy works for me to relax my nervous system and quiet my mind. It is best done alone, but if a friend wants to join in, remember there is no talking. It is a meditation-in-motion activity.

The Affirmation

Positive self-talk can take the form of affirmations. These are positive phrases or statements we use to stay in the moment and keep us from any negative or unhelpful thoughts. They are easy to use and offer us a way to stay focused on the positive. I have included one each week, drawing on the content of the teacher’s story and message. All you need to do is repeat it or write it in your journal to help turn your week around. We often get

caught up in what we can't do, and the struggles sometimes dominate. Using some positive self-talk can make a difference. And yes, this is based in science—and research shows it works if you practice.

Sample Affirmations for Teachers

Who I am is enough.

I am guided by inner wisdom.

I express my truth with confidence.

Energy fills my life.

I am free to express what I'm feeling.

I know the right thing to do.

Use the affirmations in each *Weekly Wisdom* entry to bring a positive focus to your week.

Stay Inspired

You will notice common themes emerge from the stories and practical wisdom. Paying attention to your students, keeping lists, and unplugging from the work will be shared by many of these experienced teachers. When you see the same message repeated, note it as a reminder to look at this topic again more deeply. We don't learn how to teach in one year, or two, or even twenty! Teaching is an ongoing development—we

continue to grow, learn, and emerge as the most important influencers of our students' success.

Remember, you are not alone. You can reach out at any time to an experienced teacher in your school or call a friend. Find a mentor if you don't have one. Don't let your stress overwhelm you. Learn how to find that balance in your home and work life, so you can find ways to enjoy teaching.

We know that this one little book of wisdom may not be enough for you and that you may need more support to find the momentum you seek. This is just a beginning step. Use *Weekly Wisdom* as a nurturing guide, and let this wisdom from these mentor teachers support you so you can ease through your beginning years gracefully. Nourish yourself and be kind to yourself. *You* are what your students need most.

This is your book, your journey, and your year. Read the stories, reflect on the wisdom shared, and take away what resonates with you, and what works for your classroom. You get to decide how you will integrate the ideas into your busy life one week at a time. And remember, *YOU* bring *your* wisdom and intuitive self to the classroom too. Listen to your gut and use your own intuition to guide your decisions.

Most of all, have some fun! Teaching has some hilarious moments that you just can't make up. Let's not miss the joy because all of our attention is on the challenges. Your health and wellness influence your students' health and wellness. In many ways, this book is as much about your students as it is about you. As one teacher said to me, "Happy Healthy Teachers = Happy Healthy Students."

Welcome to your *Weekly Wisdom* journey. Let's begin!