

# Take the Initiative This World Teachers' Day

Working in schools can be tough and demanding. Much of the work that staff in schools do, goes unrecognised. It can take years before we see the impact that we have had. The lack of respect for the work of staff in schools and the impact they have, has contributed to increased staff turnover and made recruitment more difficult than ever. As a result, staff shortages are common and attracting people to join the profession is challenging.

However, our work is very important and can also be very rewarding. We have the opportunity to change people's lives every single day.

If we only focus on the problems and challenges of our profession and can't find and talk about the positive aspects of our work, then we are contributing to the problem.

**"Be the change you wish to see in the world."**

**Mahatma Gandhi**

Next time you are at a social event and are asked about how things are at work, try to avoid instantly responding with how bad it is. It doesn't have to be a competition to say who has the toughest job or hardest life. Instead, try take a deep breath and think about the importance of the work that you do and the impact that you hope that you are having. Focus on your "why"!

The famous saying, **"Be the change you wish to see in the world"** is often attributed to Mahatma Gandhi, which isn't the whole story. Apparently, Gandhi didn't actually make *THAT* statement. He authored a passage that evokes the sentiment of the quote in a 1913 journal titled: **"We but mirror the world"**. Here is the statement.

*All the tendencies present in the outer world are to be found in the world of our body. If we could change ourselves, the tendencies in the world would also change. As a man changes his own nature, so does the attitude of the world change towards him. This is the divine mystery supreme. A wonderful thing it is and the source of our happiness. We need not wait to see what others do.*

Even if Gandhi didn't make the statement **"Be the change you wish to see in the world"**, I believe the message is still valid.

This World Teachers' Day I am encouraging you to think of the teachers that you have had in the past, who have inspired you.

Think back to the great teachers you have had.

**Who was your favourite teacher?**

**Why did you choose them?**

Whenever I ask people in my professional development programs to reflect on their favourite teacher, to name them and then explain why they chose that particular teacher, they inevitably talk about an emotional connection they had with that particular teacher. They felt that the teacher was genuinely interested in them as a person. Rarely do people talk about amazing depth of knowledge, effective classroom management or beautiful handouts.

This World Teachers' Day, I challenge you to reflect on your favourite teachers, try to make contact with them and let them know that they were your favourite teacher and why you remember them so fondly. Perhaps increasing the recognition and appreciation that we deserve, needs to start with us. One of my other favourite sayings is, **"What goes around, comes around!"**

Resilience

## Key points

Our work is very important but often goes unrecognized

We have the opportunity to change people's lives every day

Only focusing on the challenges contributes to the problem

It doesn't have to be "Who has the toughest job?" competition

Contact a favourite teacher from your past and let them know



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