



# Show-Me

The "Official" Newsletter of Literacy in Missouri

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Literacy...

## *Teacher's Newsletter*

# Encouraging Your Adult Students

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For most adults, being out of the classroom for even a few years can make going back to school intimidating. Your job as a teacher of adult students includes being positive and encouraging. Patience helps too.

Give them words of encouragement whenever the opportunity arises. Of course, being positive and encouraging is not the same as being condescending. Always remember that your students are adults. Genuine encouragement from one person to another, regardless of age, is a wonderful point of human interaction.

This is your challenge as a teacher of adults. Beyond teaching your subject, you have the opportunity to inspire confidence and passion in another human being. That kind of teaching changes lives. The demands on teachers are countless, and we often wonder how we can accomplish all that is expected of us. But student achievement is the key to our success. While content knowledge is important, most of us remember a special teacher for other qualities including their ability to listen, encourage, and *smile!*

Listen:

- to what is implied as well as what is said
- without contradicting or interrupting
- with empathy and interest

Encourage:

- with genuine praise
- with patience and understanding
- with support and a pat on the back

Smile:

- to ease tension
- to encourage a reluctant learner
- to welcome students

Everyone knows that a little encouragement goes a long way. But a "little encouragement" really needs to be more than the same few phrases repeated over and over again. We all need to have more than the traditional "good," very good," and "fine" and this is especially true for adults. Sincerity, creativity, and variety are powerful tools in building your student's self-esteem. Here are some possibilities:

The mission of the "Show -Me Literacy Newsletter is to provide professional information-sharing, resources and news about adult education and literacy.

## “99 Ways to Say "Very Good"”

- |   |  |  |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✦ You're on the right track now!</li> <li>✦ You've got it made.</li> <li>✦ SUPER!</li> <li>✦ That's right!</li> <li>✦ That's good.</li> <li>✦ You're really working hard today.</li> <li>✦ You are very good at that.</li> <li>✦ That's coming along nicely.</li> <li>✦ GOOD WORK!</li> <li>✦ I'm happy to see you working like that.</li> <li>✦ That's much, much better!</li> <li>✦ Exactly right.</li> <li>✦ I'm proud of the way you worked today.</li> <li>✦ You're doing that much better today.</li> <li>✦ You've just about got it.</li> <li>✦ That's the best you've ever done.</li> <li>✦ You're doing a good job.</li> <li>✦ THAT'S IT!</li> <li>✦ Now you've figured it out.</li> <li>✦ That's quite an improvement.</li> <li>✦ GREAT!</li> <li>✦ I knew you could do it.</li> <li>✦ Congratulations!</li> <li>✦ Not bad.</li> <li>✦ Keep working on it. You're improving.</li> <li>✦ Now you have it!</li> <li>✦ You are learning fast.</li> <li>✦ Good for you!</li> <li>✦ Couldn't have done it better myself.</li> <li>✦ Aren't you proud of yourself?</li> <li>✦ One more time and you'll have it.</li> <li>✦ You really make my job fun.</li> <li>✦ That's the right way to do it.</li> <li>✦ That's really nice.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✦ You've just about mastered it.</li> <li>✦ PERFECT!</li> <li>✦ That's better than ever.</li> <li>✦ Much better!</li> <li>✦ WONDERFUL!</li> <li>✦ You must have been practicing.</li> <li>✦ You did that very well.</li> <li>✦ FINE!</li> <li>✦ Nice going.</li> <li>✦ You're really going to town.</li> <li>✦ OUTSTANDING!</li> <li>✦ FANTASTIC!</li> <li>✦ TREMENDOUS!</li> <li>✦ That's how to handle that.</li> <li>✦ Now that's what I call a fine job.</li> <li>✦ That's great.</li> <li>✦ Right on!</li> <li>✦ You're really improving.</li> <li>✦ You're doing beautifully!</li> <li>✦ SUPERB!</li> <li>✦ Good remembering.</li> <li>✦ You've got that down pat.</li> <li>✦ You certainly did well today.</li> <li>✦ Keep it up!</li> <li>✦ Congratulations. You got it right!</li> <li>✦ You did a lot of work today.</li> <li>✦ Well look at you go.</li> <li>✦ That's it.</li> <li>✦ I'm very proud of you.</li> <li>✦ MARVELOUS!</li> <li>✦ I like that.</li> <li>✦ Way to go!</li> <li>✦ Now you have the hang of it.</li> <li>✦ You're doing fine!</li> <li>✦ Good thinking.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✦ That's better.</li> <li>✦ That was first class work.</li> <li>✦ EXCELLENT!</li> <li>✦ That's the best ever.</li> <li>✦ You've just about mastered it.</li> <li>✦ That kind of work makes me happy.</li> <li>✦ It's such a pleasure to teach when you work like that!</li> <li>✦ I think you're really learning a lot.</li> <li>✦ Good going.</li> <li>✦ I've never seen anyone do it better.</li> <li>✦ Keep on trying.</li> <li>✦ You outdid yourself today!</li> <li>✦ Good for you!</li> <li>✦ I think you've got it now.</li> <li>✦ That's a good (boy/girl).</li> <li>✦ Good job, (person's name).</li> <li>✦ You figured that out fast.</li> <li>✦ You remembered!</li> <li>✦ You are doing the right thing.</li> <li>✦ TERRIFIC!</li> <li>✦ Nothing can stop you now.</li> <li>✦ That's the way to do it.</li> <li>✦ SENSATIONAL!</li> <li>✦ You've got your brain in gear today.</li> <li>✦ PERFECT!</li> <li>✦ You're getting better every day.</li> <li>✦ You did it that time!</li> <li>✦ That's not half bad.</li> <li>✦ Nice going.</li> <li>✦ You haven't missed a thing!</li> <li>✦ WOW!</li> <li>✦ That's the way!</li> <li>✦ Keep up the good work.</li> </ul> |
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Adapted from “FOR THOSE DAYS WHEN YOU CAN'T THINK OF WHAT TO SAY” Courtesy of Arzella Dirksen, Founder, **HelpCenter 4, KCNC Television**

## Test Day Tips for Your Students

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Here are tips and need-to-know information that can help your students prepare for test day.

- Scan the reading passage quickly to get the main idea of the passage.
- Read the questions quickly to get an idea of the information required so you can keep them in mind when reading the passage.
- Read the passage slowly and carefully, Pay special attention to main phrases and idea.
- Get as much sleep as you can in the **week** before the test and especially the night before. Studies show that a good night's sleep can boost your score by two points or more.
- Eat a power breakfast. If you do, you can actually improve your working memory, logical reasoning and stamina. That adds up to more points!
- Have you photo ID with you.
- Dress in layers in case the room is hot or cold.
- Bring pencils and erasers.
- Wear a watch and keep track of the time. Read the instructions at the beginning of each section very carefully.
- Be aware of the time so that the allocated time for the section of the will not run out before you complete the GED test.
- Take the path of least resistance. Leave the most difficult questions for last. Answer the easier questions first.
- On the harder questions, if you do not know the answer, re-read the question. Then take a good guess!
- There is no penalty for wrong answers so if you don't know the answer a guess will not penalize you. The GED testing process scores only correct answers and does not deduct points for wrong answers.
- Reward yourself! When completing a GED test, treat yourself to a good movie or a great night out! You deserve it.
- Never give up. Never, never, never, never, *never!*

## Upcoming Fall 2009 Workshops

Jana Groner Skopec, Professional Development Specialist

End –of-summer doldrums got you down? Teachers' experience those doldrums too! Make a plan for revitalizing yourself this fall. The Missouri **Adult Education and Literacy Professional Development Center (MAEL PDC)** makes it easy with its new fall workshops online and face-to-face of numerous resources for new teachers, experienced teachers and the adult education teacher junkie.

All resources in the *MAEL PDC* emphasize from change from the inside out. As participants learn to connect their personal life and daily routine, they experience *real* transformation. We promise the teachers will learn to practice new ideas and strategies at the workshops they attend this fall! In all workshops, teachers will develop lasting friendships with peer teachers. They form real community. Together, they help revitalize the classroom! Exciting new additions to the **MAEL PDC** family of resources include:

Health Literacy III

Math Institute III

Goal Setting

Financial Literacy

Don't settle for the doldrums this fall. Catch the fresh wind of the **MAEL PDC** with Fun fall resources!

# Stress in the Classroom

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Teachers have one of the most stressful jobs. One of the greatest challenges of teaching is not to let it consume all of our time and energy. We struggle with effectively managing teaching loads and schedules to find time for the many other activities, events, and responsibilities in our lives. This includes time for other academic responsibilities, family, friends, personal endeavors, nourishing the soul, and simply time for reflection, renewal and reinvigoration.

## GENERAL CAUSES OF STRESS AT WORK

- organizational problems
- insufficient back-up
- long or unsociable hours
- poor status, pay and promotion prospects
- unnecessary rituals and procedures
- uncertainty and insecurity
  
- **SPECIFIC CAUSES OF STRESS AT WORK**
- unclear role specifications
- role conflict
- unrealistically high self-expectations (perfectionism)
- inability to influence decision making (powerlessness)
- frequent clashes with superiors
- isolation from colleagues' support
- lack of variety
- poor communication
- inadequate leadership
- conflicts with colleagues
- inability to finish a job
- fighting unnecessary battles

## TASK-RELATED CAUSES OF STRESS AT WORK

- difficult clients or subordinates
- insufficient training
- emotional involvement with clients or subordinates
- the responsibilities of the job
- inability to help or act effectively

## STRESS AT HOME

- stress caused by a partner
- stress caused by children
- stress caused by domestic arrangements
- stress caused by environmental pressures upon the home

## EFFECTS OF TOO MUCH STRESS

- concentration and attention span decrease
- distractibility increases
- short- and long-term memory deteriorate
- response speed becomes unpredictable
- error rate increases
- powers of organization and long-term planning deteriorate
- delusions and thought disorders increase
- physical and psychological tensions increase
- hypochondria increases
- changes take place in personality traits
- existing personality problems increase
- moral and emotional constraints weaken
- depression and helplessness appear
- self-esteem falls sharply
- speech problems increase
- interests and enthusiasms diminish
- absenteeism increases
- drug abuse increases
- energy levels are low
- sleep patterns are disrupted
- cynicism about clients and colleagues increases
- new information is ignored
- responsibilities are shifted onto others
- problems are 'solved' at an increasingly superficial level
- bizarre behavior patterns appear
- suicide threats may be made

# 10 Ways to Reduce a Teachers' Classroom Stress

Teaching is a rewarding career, and many teachers will tell you that they love their job. After all, as a teacher you get to make a direct impact on the students that you teach, and hopefully instill some values in them that they otherwise might not get. The key is in knowing how to reduce your classroom stress, and refocus your students on the lesson at hand. Here are 5 things that you can do to reduce stress in your classroom.

## 1. Add laughter to your classroom.

Laughter is good medicine. It tends to unplug stress in you and your students, and gives your students a sense of togetherness, as they have your sense of humor in common. There is a delicate balance to adding laughter to the classroom and having that laughter get out of control, so be ready to bring your students back into focus quickly.

## 2. Build self-esteem in your students.

Students who suffer from a low self-esteem will sometimes opt themselves out of even trying to learn in the classroom. If they live in a home environment where all they hear is that they are stupid, they will start to believe this, and the effort will dwindle. Try some activities that help build self-esteem, such as looking for ways that students can have leadership roles in the classroom, talk to students one-on-one and show an interest in their work habits, and incorporate easy questions into tests, in-between harder questions, so students with a low self-esteem can feel good about their answers.

## 3. Provide effective discipline measures.

When dealing with the topic of discipline in your classroom, you should have effective discipline measures. You may have rules for behavior in your classroom, but may quickly come to find that not every rule works with every student. You have to learn what discipline strategies work for different students. This will make the classroom less stressful.

## 4. Plan, Prioritize, Organize, and Simplify.

An essential part of reducing stress is learning to set and maintain priorities. If it is helpful to you, make a "to do" list, purchase a personal organizer, learn to say no, and avoid procrastinating. You can improve the quality of your life by organizing and simplifying such areas as your lifestyle, personal time, shopping, work, finances, and health.

## 5. Make an attitude adjustment.

When you feel yourself becoming stressed in the classroom, try to think of the situation as a challenge. Keep a positive attitude and realize that you cannot control everything that happens in your classroom, but you can react to situations proactively. Students will eventually follow your lead when they are in your room.

## 101 WAYS TO COPE WITH STRESS

Ways to deal with life *outside* the classroom!

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Get up 15 minutes earlier</li> <li>2. Prepare for the morning the night before</li> <li>3. Avoid tight fitting clothes</li> <li>4. Avoid relying on chemical aids</li> <li>5. Set appointments ahead</li> <li>6. Don't rely on your memory ... write it down</li> <li>7. Practice preventive maintenance</li> <li>8. Make duplicate keys</li> <li>9. Say "no" more often</li> <li>10. Set priorities in your life</li> <li>11. Avoid negative people</li> <li>12. Use time wisely</li> <li>13. Simplify meal times</li> <li>14. Always make copies of important papers</li> <li>15. Anticipate your needs</li> <li>16. Repair anything that doesn't work properly</li> <li>17. Ask for help with the jobs you dislike</li> <li>18. Break large tasks into bite size portions</li> <li>19. Look at problems as challenges</li> <li>20. Look at challenges differently</li> <li>21. Un-clutter your life</li> <li>22. Smile</li> <li>23. Be prepared for rain</li> <li>24. Tickle a baby</li> <li>25. Pet a friendly dog/cat</li> <li>26. Don't know all the answers</li> <li>27. Look for a silver lining</li> <li>28. Say something nice to someone</li> <li>29. Teach a kid to fly a kite</li> <li>30. Walk in the rain</li> <li>31. Schedule play time into every day</li> <li>32. Take a bubble bath</li> <li>33. Be aware of the decisions you make</li> <li>34. Believe in yourself</li> <li>35. Stop saying negative things to yourself</li> <li>36. Visualize yourself winning</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>37. Develop your sense of humor</li> <li>38. Stop thinking tomorrow will be a better today</li> <li>39. Have goals for yourself</li> <li>40. Dance a jig</li> <li>41. Say "hello" to a stranger</li> <li>42. Ask a friend for a hug</li> <li>43. Look up at the stars</li> <li>44. Practice breathing slowly</li> <li>45. Learn to whistle a tune</li> <li>46. Read a poem</li> <li>47. Listen to a symphony</li> <li>48. Watch a ballet</li> <li>49. Read a story curled up in bed</li> <li>50. Do a brand new thing</li> <li>51. Stop a bad habit</li> <li>52. Buy yourself a flower</li> <li>53. Take time to smell the flowers</li> <li>54. Find support from others</li> <li>55. Ask someone to be your "vent partner"</li> <li>56. Do it today</li> <li>57. Work at being cheerful and optimistic</li> <li>58. Put safety first</li> <li>59. Do everything in moderation</li> <li>60. Pay attention to your appearance</li> <li>61. Strive for Excellence NOT perfection</li> <li>62. Stretch your limits a little each day</li> <li>63. Look at a work of art</li> <li>64. Hum a jingle</li> <li>65. Maintain your weight</li> <li>66. Plant a tree</li> <li>67. Feed the birds</li> <li>68. Practice grace under pressure</li> <li>69. Stand up and stretch</li> <li>70. Always have a plan "B"</li> <li>71. Learn a new doodle</li> <li>72. Memorize a joke</li> <li>73. Be responsible for your feelings</li> <li>74. Learn to meet your own needs</li> <li>75. Become a better listener</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>76. Know your limitations and let others know them, too</li> <li>77. Tell someone to have a good day in pig Latin</li> <li>78. Throw a paper airplane</li> <li>79. Exercise every day</li> <li>80. Learn the words to a new song</li> <li>81. Get to work early</li> <li>82. Clean out one closet</li> <li>83. Play patty cake with a toddler</li> <li>84. Go on a picnic</li> <li>85. Take a different route to work</li> <li>86. Leave work early (with permission)</li> <li>87. Put air freshener in your car</li> <li>88. Watch a movie and eat popcorn</li> <li>89. Write a note to a far away friend</li> <li>90. Go to a ball game and scream</li> <li>91. Cook a meal and eat it by candlelight</li> <li>92. Recognize the importance of unconditional love</li> <li>93. Remember that stress is an attitude</li> <li>94. Keep a journal</li> <li>95. Practice a monster smile</li> <li>96. Remember you always have options</li> <li>97. Have a support network of people, places and things</li> <li>98. Quit trying to fix other people</li> <li>99. Get enough sleep</li>   <li>100. Talk less and listen more</li>   <li>101. Freely praise other people</li>   <p><b>BONUS:</b> Relax, take each day at a time...you have the rest of your life to live!</p> </ol>
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