

# COACHING CONNECTION

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## New Year's Resolutions

Welcome Back! The start of the school year always finds me more nostalgic than June ever does. It's hard letting go of leisurely summer days and the time we've been able to invest in our families, our hobbies, and our friends. I remember the first time I put my daughter on a school bus—how exciting and terrifying and sad that was—in equal measure. Back then, I was pretty certain that in the years that would follow, the first day of school would be easier. It never has been!

However, for as hard as it can be to make the transition back to our school year routine, there is something comforting and familiar about it as well. We miss the structure that it provides our days, and we miss our friends and colleagues, and we miss our students too. Fortunately, I get to see *some* of my favorite teachers in different settings during the summer, and I caught up with some of my own learning as well. I'm looking forward to sharing new ideas and resources with those that I know!

The new year always invites new opportunities, new connections, and new room for plans to become reality. One of my goals includes expanding the ways in which I'm able to support the work of teachers. This newsletter is one simple vehicle for that! I'll be sharing what I'm learning in this space monthly, and I'd like to encourage you to participate as well. Take a peek inside for how you can do so.

Here's to a fun and productive year of learning!

-Angela



**Building Bucket Fillers on Page 3!**

## In This Month's Issue

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### Instructional Strategies:

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### Books and Authors:

*Have You Filled a Bucket Today?*  
 Carol McCloud

### Get Connected:

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### Connecting Kids:

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### Dispositions of Practice:

Courage and Collegiality

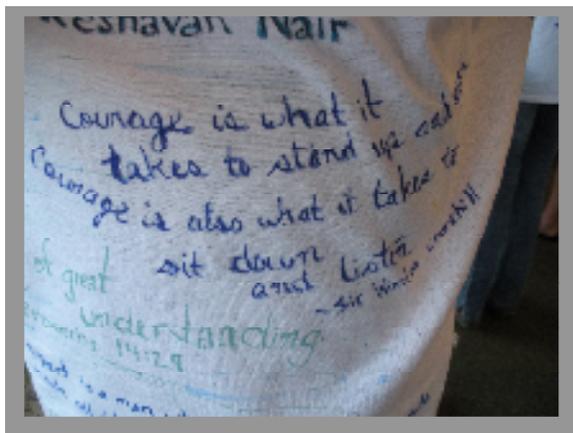
### Cyber Spotlights:

Mike Fisher  
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 Angela Maiers



#### What is COURAGE?

What does it mean to have courage as a learner?  
Even the youngest students can begin setting goals  
around this Disposition.



This summer, kids and teachers in the WNY Young Writers' Studio made Dispositions t-shirts that helped them explore and embrace these important elements of learning. See more examples at:

<http://tinyurl.com/yccnw2e>

**“Cautious, careful people, always casting about to preserve their reputation and social standing, never can bring about a reform. Those who are really in earnest must be willing to be anything or nothing in the world's estimation, and publicly and privately, in season and out, avow their sympathy with despised and persecuted ideas and their advocates, and bear the consequences.”**

Susan B. Anthony

## Creating Courageous Writers

Helping students develop courage as writers will enable them to select writing topics that are more engaging for their audiences and to take risks that enable them to grow. How can we accomplish this?

- Work with students to define what courageous writing is and what courageous writers do
- Share models of courageous writing using mentor texts and student work
- Develop and share rubrics that define pathways for those who are eager to grow their courage
- Expect that students set goals, reflect, and assess their progress as courageous writers
- Celebrate their accomplishments!

## Collegiality: More Than Being Nice

True collegiality is about so much more than saying hello to those you pass in the hall or taking the time to ask how someone's weekend was. Collegiality involves our eagerness to work with others in collaborative ways....even those we may disagree with. It's about co-planning, co-teaching, and co-learning. Collegiality has everything to do with sharing our expertise so that we can be of service to others, and it has everything to do with sharing our work, so that our colleagues may learn from it.

There's more, too. It's not enough to listen politely to others and to appreciate all that they give. Unless we are willing to invest our own time, energy, work, and care in the relationships we have with others, we cannot call ourselves collegial. We must make a contribution, and we must initiate our own dialogue. All of this requires risk, discomfort, and the careful negotiation of relationships and behaviors. Being collegial truly requires courage. *How do we teach this skill to students?*

## Creating Cooperative Learners

Cooperative Learning fosters the development of collegiality, and it also requires students to practice courage. As the new year begins, many teachers are beginning to establish norms and expectations that allow for powerful Cooperative Learning sessions. The resources located on this page can support you in your efforts to create collaborative and collegial classroom cultures!

<http://tinyurl.com/ya9y8bo>

## Courage, Collegiality, and Ideas

### Mentor Text Pick of the Month:

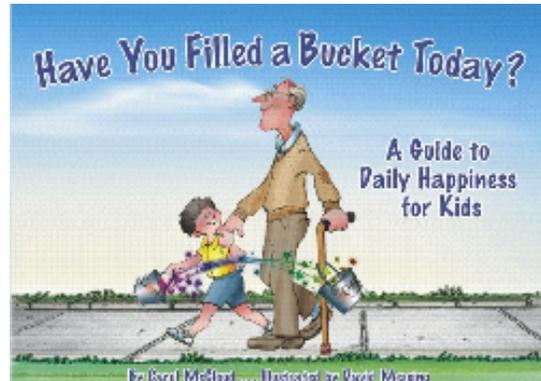
*Have You Filled a Bucket Today?  
A Guide to Daily Happiness for Kids*  
by Carol McCloud

Merrill Lundgren, otherwise known as The Bucket Man, has inspired a movement around COURAGE and COLLEGIALLY that teachers all over the world are eagerly supporting. The premise is this: each of us carries within us an invisible bucket that stores our feelings. When our bucket is full, we are happy. When our bucket is empty, we feel sad. Bucket fillers are those who know how to behave in ways that create joy—filling the buckets of those around them and their own in the process.

Children's author Carol McCloud has captured the very heart of this in her book, *Have You Filled a Bucket Today? A Guide to Daily Happiness for Kids*. As I began reading, I quickly realized that this wonderful little book also serves as a great mentor text for Ideas!

There are a number of websites and resources available online for those who are interested in learning more and sharing this concept with others! Just follow the link below. What a fun way to build a COURAGEOUS and COLLEGIALLY classroom environment!

<http://tinyurl.com/y9dk795>



I've recently purchase several copies of Carol McCloud's book, and they will be available for loan to all teachers that I work with during October coaching days! Let me know if you would like to borrow!



Visit Mrs. Walkers FROGTASTIC Website to learn how she is helping her fourth grade class become courageous bucket fillers!

Lesson plans included!

Photo Credit and Link to Her Site:

<http://tinyurl.com/y9atkut>

## CYBER SPOTLIGHT: VISIT THESE EDUCATORS ONLINE

Many of you are familiar with local instructional coach, **Mike Fisher**. Mike has recently left the WNYRIC to pursue other adventures, but you can keep up with him online at his blog: <http://www.digigogy.blogspot.com>

**Angela Maiers** is well-known for her literacy expertise, which she shares with readers daily right here: <http://www.angelamaiers.com>

## Establishing a Personal Learning Network

Many teachers are beginning to use the internet for far more than quick Google searches or online shopping. In fact, social networking tools make it easier than ever to connect to those who can inform our work and support our efforts to do the great things we do in classrooms. I've learned through experience that creating Personal Learning Network (PLN) enables me to learn, share resources, and serve others far more meaningfully and efficiently than I ever imagined.

Building and sustaining such a network can be an overwhelming venture, and this is why it's important to assess your own needs and purposes before diving in. What kind of networked learner are you currently? Reflecting on that can help you set small goals and begin establishing purposeful connections:

**If You are a Beginner,  
You are Still Connecting....**

Face-to-face  
In Real Time

**You Can Become an Observer By....**

Visiting social networks  
Reading wikis and blogs

**Dynamic Participants Are...**

Using RSS  
Subscribing to Blogs and Commenting  
Starting Their Own Blogs and Linking to Others  
Connecting on Twitter  
Engaging in NING  
Finding Ways to Connect Their Students to Global Classrooms

Still overwhelmed? Don't be. Instead, consider asking me for help while I'm in your buildings this year coaching or in my travels elsewhere. In my experience, a fifteen minute conversation can help anyone begin establishing their own Personal Learning Networks. I also provide workshops and sustained support around this in other ways. Whether I work in your building regularly or not, we can set up a quick coaching session to get you started. Also--if you are attending, feel free to drop into the workshop that I am co-facilitating with Theresa Gray and Jennifer Borgioli at the National Staff Development Council Conference this December or think about customizing a workshop to be hosted in your own building. See you online!

## Working Together 2 Make a Difference

Engaged in service learning or volunteerism with your students? Interested in connecting to others globally who are doing the same in ways that are safe and simple?

Consider joining this online community, which I co-moderate with teachers from Australia and Canada. For more information, contact me!

<http://workingtogether2makeadifference.ning.com>

### THIS SPACE BELONGS TO YOU!

I would like to devote this space to pieces shared by those who are reading. Whether you are a parent, teacher, administrator, student, writer, or a service provider, this space is available for you to begin sharing your reflections, expertise, and ideas within!

Please consider submitting the following:

- Links to favorite resources
- A description of a favorite lesson
- A piece of creative writing
- Memoirs
- Brief articles promoting a practice
- Letters of appreciation to colleagues and students
- Celebrations of student work
- Photographs and brief reflections about the great things happening around you

Pieces may be submitted to me digitally at [stockmanangela@gmail.com](mailto:stockmanangela@gmail.com). All who are published in newsletters this year will be entered into a drawing, to be held in June. Winners may choose from a one year student fellowship in the WNY Young Writers' Studio, which can be gifted to a young writer that you know OR a basket of great books relevant to writing practice and instruction as well as a \$20 Amazon gift card.