

Introduction: There's No Such Thing as "Only a Teacher"

You never hear anyone say, "I'm only an electrical engineer." Or, "I'm only a CPA." Or, "I'm only a dentist." But too many educators say, "I'm only a teacher." They're wrong. There's no such thing as "only a teacher."

Unfortunately, teachers are often their own worst enemies or detractors. Have you noticed that of all the people who downplay the role of teaching, many are teachers themselves?

It's not that teachers are more modest or humble than other people. It's that many suffer from a severe case of "only a teacher syndrome," a professional inferiority complex. It can be a self-fulfilling prophecy.

Respect begins at home. If teachers don't respect themselves or their profession, why should anyone else? Sadly, respect for educators is in short supply these days. Even—especially—among educators themselves.

In America, we desperately need to hang on to the good teachers we have and attract more highly qualified men and women into the profession. Of course, that can't occur unless teachers are made to feel special, needed, and worthwhile again. That's not happening today.

2 INSPIRATIONAL QUOTES, NOTES, & ANECDOTES

Too many of our teachers are stressed out, strung out, and wrung out. They need help to

- restore their resiliency,
- find new meaning in their work,
- energize their performance,
- rekindle passion for teaching,
- be reminded of why they became teachers in the first place, and
- have more fun on the job!

That's where this little book comes in.

Teachers matter. Someone needs to tell them that. And tell the rest of the population as well. The many voices in this collection make a powerful unified statement all teachers need to hear and that the rest of the nation should hear before it's too late.

Only a teacher? I don't think so. Being a teacher is more than a job. It is an honor, a sacred trust, and a profound privilege. Teaching is every society's most important work. Here are a few reasons why:

- Great teachers are necessary for a great nation.
- Behind all great men and women are the teachers who made them great.
- Even geniuses need teachers.
- Teachers are the nation's unsung heroes who get to see tomorrow's heroes before anyone else.
- Teachers have a ringside seat on the enchanted world of childhood. It keeps them young.
- Teachers change lives and see miracles happen every day.
- Teachers build tomorrow's "fond memories" today.
- Teachers impact generations of learners and have unforgettable influence.

The list could go on and on. But I rest my case. Teaching is the greatest profession. But don't just take my word for it. Read on!