

Why It's Okay To Be Weird

By Michael Linsin on January 6, 2018

Here at SCM, we've talked a lot about the importance of maintaining a calm disposition.

It is, without a doubt, the most effective way to keep misbehavior-causing excitability out of your classroom.

But it's also caused some confusion among SCM readers.

You see, staying calm *doesn't* mean you must button up your personality.

It doesn't mean you must dampen your enthusiasm or become a robot when you step in front of your students.

In fact, you'll do well to do the opposite.

Each of us is unique – our sense of humor, our voice, our walk, our expressions, our dance moves.

We're uncommon and peculiar. We're idiosyncratic and quirky.

We're, um . . . weird.

And the more we embrace our weirdness, the more effective we'll be.

Here's why:

1. Weird is interesting.

When you're uptight, stoic, and over-controlled, you come across as boring and far less interesting than when you're true to who you really are.

Students are drawn to uniqueness, to teachers who are unabashedly themselves. They want to be around them, learn from them, and follow where they lead.

And when students are drawn *to you* and desire to be around you and get to know you better, building rapport and influential relationships becomes effortless and less time-consuming.

2. Weird is inspiring.

The way you talk, move, smile, laugh, tell stories, and express yourself brings life to your classroom.

There is no passion in trying to be someone you're not. You can fake it, but there will always be something missing. There will always be a disconnect.

It doesn't matter if you're outgoing or more on the quiet, reserved side, you'll never be more inspirational than when you're in the present moment and being who you really are.

3. Weird is genuine.

Students don't trust teachers who put on a show of perfection in their demeanor, manner, tone, and style. Besides being bland and standoffish, it *feels* dishonest – unmistakably so.

It feels phony and manufactured, like you're trying to pull the wool over their eyes. It's also stressful and impossible to maintain without losing your composure.

Although there is nothing wrong with striving to do your best and be at your best, the genuine article will always represent your most comfortable and effective self.

Just Be You

It's not uncommon for bright, funny, lovely people to change drastically the moment the morning bell rings.

It's almost as if the light winks out and a cold perfectionist takes its place.

Although it may help keep a lid on an out-of-control class – along with yelling and scolding – it makes creating a happy and well-behaved learning environment all but impossible.

Just being you, on the other hand, embracing your weird and wonderful self, unapologetically, is your greatest strength.

Introverted or extroverted, storyteller or comedian, gentle motivator or bundle of energy.

Just be you.

No one does it better.

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Smart Classroom Management