

Small Steps Big Changes Tools for Personal and Professional Development

Response Questions for University Credit

CHAPTER 1 QUESTIONS

1. Are you discontent or stressed about some aspects of your job you cannot change?
2. Are you too busy to even notice if you are discontent or stressed?
3. Do you sometimes feel tired, burned out or less enthusiastic about your job?
4. Do you find some people difficult to deal with in your job?
5. Do you know you need to make some changes to optimize your health and well-being but don't have time or don't know where to start?

CHAPTER 2 QUESTIONS

1. How might you apply the Wabi Sabi philosophy to teaching?

CHAPTER 4 QUESTIONS

1. What prompted you to become a teacher? What attracted you to the position?
2. Is that attraction still there?
3. What are the positives of your job, in terms of personal fulfillment?
4. Do you currently see yourself as the teacher you aspire to be? If not, are you ready to acquire tools, presented in this course, to formulate a clear path for professional success and fulfillment?

CHAPTER 5 QUESTIONS

1. What adjectives would you use to describe how you feel right now at this very moment, about your teaching position? (Perhaps any of the following: excited, passionate, joyful, fulfilled, or unappreciated, unfulfilled, stressed, overwhelmed, bored)
2. Are you willing to take action to learn strategies that diminish the impact of negative aspects of your job?
3. What exactly is it that you love about your job?
4. What aspects of the job make you feel excited, passionate, joyful and energized?

CHAPTER 6 QUESTIONS

1. Are you experiencing one or more of the burnout factors mentioned in this chapter, or experiencing any burnout factors not mentioned?
2. If so, which burnout factors do you perceive to be the strongest?

CHAPTER 7 QUESTIONS

Please discuss the following as it may pertain to you:

1. What discontent are you feeling on the job?
2. Is the discontent you feel really about specific things that are happening on your job that you cannot change, or is the discontent possibly also about:
 - Discontent due to what's happening in your personal life?
 - Discontent due to feeling tired, burned out, or less enthusiastic about teaching?
 - Discontent due to sensitivities or unmet expectations?
 - Discontent with no clear understanding why?

CHAPTER 8 QUESTIONS

1. Name a few strategies you'd like to implement to your day, to make the positive aspects of your job and your personal life stand out as prominent, and therefore diminish the impact of undesirable aspects.

CHAPTER 9 QUESTIONS

Do you have expectations, personal or professional, that have not been met? If so...

1. Are your emotions possibly preventing you from objectively and accurately seeing the situation at hand?
2. Are your emotions possibly preventing you from creating a viable alternate plan of action?
3. Are you willing to take small steps to let go of these negative past experiences and instead concentrate on new goals?

CHAPTER 10 QUESTIONS

1. Describe one past teaching experience that still touches your heart.
2. Describe one past teaching experience that still makes you laugh.
3. Describe at least one challenge or experience you had while teaching, that you now realize brought you more wisdom, compassion, and personal fulfillment.

CHAPTER 11 QUESTIONS

1. Describe a time when you took time to ask questions and find out more about someone.
2. How do you think that made them feel? How did that make you feel?

CHAPTER 15 QUESTIONS

1. Names two types of optimism. Which type seems more prominent in your use right now?

CHAPTER 16 QUESTIONS

1. Name at least two benefits of practicing gratitude.

CHAPTER 17 QUESTIONS

1. Recall a time when you persevered and accomplished something because you strongly believed in your ability to do so.

CHAPTER 18 QUESTIONS

1. How does the phrase "acquiring a taste" have to do with establishing positive relationships?
2. Recall a time when you made an effort to "acquire a taste" and you are glad you did.
3. Are there people on the job who you will try to work on "acquiring a taste" for? That is, noticing the good qualities and then hopefully diminishing the impact of annoyances from them.
4. If so, what strategies might you employ to get to know their good qualities?

CHAPTER 21 QUESTIONS

1. Describe a time when you handled a difficult or uncomfortable situation with grace, diplomacy and perhaps humor.

CHAPTER 22 QUESTIONS

1. Name at least three forms of forgiveness.

CHAPTER 24 QUESTIONS

1. Does Dr. Mantell's quote, "If it doesn't make a difference, then handle it with indifference" resonate with you?

CHAPTER 25 QUESTIONS

1. Complete Tina Lifford's statement as it applies to your own personal goal: Up until now, and from this moment on...

CHAPTER 28 QUESTIONS

1. What strategies mentioned in this chapter, or other strategies you know of, will you employ to establish and maintain a positive relationship with colleagues and administrators?

CHAPTER 29-35 QUESTIONS

1. Name some benefits humor can play in your professional life.

CHAPTER 38 QUESTIONS

1. State 7 questions to ask yourself before reacting impulsively to a difficult situation or before making a decision.
2. You have succeeded in diffusing emotionally-charged situations in the past. You have accomplished difficult goals in your past with clear visions and focused effort. You have the strength to do so again when needed, in your present and future.
3. Please share one instance where, upon reflection, you feel proud of how you handled a difficult situation.

CHAPTER 40 QUESTIONS

1. Recall a time when you openly admitted to making a mistake.
2. Was it ultimately better to having admitted the error rather than trying to cover it up?

CHAPTER 42 QUESTIONS

1. Name some strategies you plan to implement to promote a positive school environment and to establish, and maintain, positive professional relationships.

CHAPTER 43 QUESTIONS

1. What are some tools for effective attentive listening and intentional effective inquiry?
2. What is the quote by Epicurus? How is that quote relevant to a teacher?

CHAPTER 44 QUESTIONS

1. What are some ways to add more variety, excitement and success to your daily work experience?

CHAPTER 46 QUESTIONS

1. Name some of the "right shoes" needed to be prepared for an unexpected difficult situation.

CHAPTER 47 QUESTIONS

Recall a time when you were apprehensive about change but it worked out just fine.

CHAPTER 49 QUESTIONS

1. I'd like you to reflect when you were an active participant in life rather than an observer...
 - o Ways you have lived well
 - o Ways you have loved well
 - o The lives of people you have touched
 - o The adventures you've had
 - o The things you've tried and failed at as well as things you've tried and accomplished
 - o Wisdom you've acquired
 - o Difficulties you've survived
 - o Obstacles you have overcome

CHAPTER 52 QUESTIONS

- What are the 8 steps to create "what you want your life to feel like"?
- Is what you are doing right now getting you closer to what you want your life to feel like tomorrow?
- At present, are you open to noticing opportunities that may bring lifelong positive changes to make your life feel the way you want it to feel?

CHAPTER 53 QUESTIONS

1. What can you do now, instead of waiting until later, that will enhance your life right now?

CHAPTER 54 QUESTIONS

1. Name a few strategies you plan to employ to “make your work play”.

CHAPTER 57 QUESTIONS

1. What activities are you going to prune to make room for more essential activities?
2. Write down a top priority activity you plan to add to “feed your soul”. Next, write down how you will make time to schedule that activity.

CHAPTER 58 QUESTIONS

1. Name some mood changer strategies you plan to try when needed.

CHAPTER 59 QUESTIONS

1. What tools for on-the-job time management will you employ for effective teaching performance and personal well-being?

CHAPTER 62 QUESTIONS

1. Identify one specific goal you have not accomplished because of any of the following:
 - Negative internal dialogue
 - Self-doubt
 - Blaming people or circumstances
 - Making excuses
 - Allowing distractions
2. Are you willing to start working on reducing or eliminating the impact of the goal-defeating factor?

Regarding your Professional Life:

1. What would you like others to say about your on-the-job accomplishment?
2. What would you like to say about yourself as you look back at your professional career with pride?

CHAPTER 62 QUESTIONS, CONTINUED

Regarding your Personal Life:

1. How do you want your life to FEEL?
2. What personal goals would you like to say you will accomplish in the near future that seem challenging right now?

CHAPTER 63 QUESTIONS

1. What nutritional, sleep and/or exercise changes do you plan to make in order to fuel your body with the nourishment it needs for vibrancy, positivity, energy and joy?

END OF BOOK PRACTICUM

Please plan and implement one main focus strategy from the list below that you will put to practice, assess outcome, and report on the progress towards the professional goal you selected.

Focus strategy choices for required additional classroom practicum:

Strategies to establish and maintain positive relationships, and effective communication skills, with administrators and colleagues

- Strategies on how to greet difficult situations with flexibility, grace, tact and diplomacy
- On-the-job strategies for dealing with difficult situations or difficult people
- Mindfulness and gratitude strategies to diminish the impact of strong negative emotions
- Tools to “let others just be”
- Tools to avoid making quick, hasty judgments or decisions
- Ways to add more variety, excitement and success to your daily work experience
- Tools for effective time and energy management

Please share and reflect, in the focus area of choice:

- What you learned
- How you applied the learning
- Assessment/Evidence/No Evidence of teacher growth
- Next steps for continued professional growth

COURSE AND BOOK CRITIQUE

1. Did you find this book enjoyable to read?
2. Did you find this book and this course helpful? Please explain why.
3. What was your favorite quote in the book? Why?
4. Would you recommend this book to others?
5. Would you recommend this book study/course as the basis for a school or district-wide teacher work day?
6. Would you like to ask administration to arrange for the author, Karin Alexander, come to your school to lead a motivational staff in-service?
 - If so, please contact the author through Courses4Teachers Inc. at:
courses4teachers@courses4teachers.net

Praise yourself for taking time to read this book to acquire strategies for more personal and professional fulfillment.

Praise yourself for making a commitment to set some new realistic goals that will bring joy.

Acknowledge that you have the power to create the wonderful life you deserve.

Thank you for taking this course. We hope it reminded you, or provided to you, concrete strategies to enhance both your personal and professional life.

-Karin Alexander