



BUCKET FILL-OSOPHY 101™

Weekly Words of Wisdom to Keep Your Bucket Filled

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The Five Vowels of Making a Difference

by Carol McCloud

In order to be better bucket fillers, teachers, parents and other youth mentors have only to look at the five vowels in the alphabet.

A is for Acceptance. True acceptance means never comparing a child with another or attempting to change a child to meet your expectations. Acceptance does not mean accepting all behaviors but rather delighting in each child's individuality. Children know when adults accept them. My best friend in high school was the oldest of 11 children. When I went to her house, which was often, her mother always greeted me with a smile and a kind word. I could never understand how she could possibly want another child in the house and actually be happy to set another plate for dinner.

E is for Encouragement. Genuine encouragement is essential for a child's self-confidence. I sat next to a high-school math teacher on one of my flights and he admitted he was rather "burned out" on teaching. He said he had reached a point where he gives the information to his students and they either do the work or not. "It's up to them," he said. After some discussion, I asked him a simple question, "At what age, do people no longer need or benefit from encouragement?" Encouragement brings out the best in all of us, not just children.

I is for Inspire. Help children to reach for more by setting a positive example and leading a life they want to emulate. We all need good role models, these days more than ever. Read a biography of a person you admire and notice how it sets the bar a little higher for you and inspires you to be more.

O is for Openness. Open up your life and let children really know you. Tell them stories about growing up, how you learned what you learned, and about the people who helped you along the way. Be honest about your weaknesses. Don't be afraid to let them see you cry. Let them know what it is to be human with a full range of emotions. Be genuine. Be real.

U is for Understanding. We all want to be understood; children more than anyone. We are not cookie cutter people. We all have different backgrounds, emotional make-ups, and we all experience life differently. When we make the effort to discover what a person is all about, the rewards can be great.

A, E, I, O, U are the five vowels of bucket filling. Acceptance, Encouragement, Inspiration, Openness, and Understanding are essential elements in the language of bucket filling.

Congratulations Casey!

Casey Benjamin, of West Dundee, Illinois, is our bucket filler of the week. You have a book coming your way. Every bucket filler is a winner. Encourage your friends to get their buckets filled by subscribing to our free e-newsletter at www.bucketfillers101.com

Words of Wisdom

The ability to affect the quality of a day in a positive way - be it your own day or someone else's - is the highest of all arts. -- *Henry David Thoreau*

Making a Difference

February 2010 ■ Presentation Update

Sessions: 16 ■ Attendance: 2,970

- Attwood Elementary, Macomb, MI
- Greenwood Elementary, Toledo, OH
- South Dakota Cooperative Extension Service, Wessington, SD
- Roosevelt Elementary, Zeeland, MI
- Veteran's Park Academy for the Arts, Lehigh Acres, FL
- Riley Elementary, St. Johns, MI
- Wisconsin Child Care Administrators Association Conference, Wisconsin Dells, WI

Total Bucketfilling sessions taught through February 28, 2011

■ Sessions: 1,949

■ Attendance: 288,960



Not Just For Kids

Five-star Amazon.com review of Growing Up with a Bucket Full of Happiness by "BEX"

"Even if you are already a grownup, this book can help 'clarify your thinking.' Just as Carol McCloud's earlier books give children a vocabulary to describe experiences and their feelings, 'Growing Up' puts into concrete words many of the things we adults wish someone had explained to us long before we learned them the hard way. Yet this book is not preachy. It is clear and matter of fact, yet filled with warmth, and it gives readers tools to incorporate the practice of happiness into their daily lives."