



FAN, TA'LIM VA AMALIYOT INTEGRATSIYASI

Guliniso Nigmatova

an English teacher at the secondary school №13 in Kattakurgan town, Samarkand

THE CONCEPT OF TEACHER BURNOUT AND HOW STRIVING TO HELP LEARNERS ACQUIRE LANGUAGE, AND BEING A SUCCESSFUL TEACHER IN GENERAL

Abstract. This article examines the concept of teacher burnout and how the desire to help students master the language and be a successful teacher in general can sometimes exhaust teachers and force them to quit teaching. The author wanted to share a few ideas that will help teachers stay upbeat and avoid some of the pitfalls that can lead to teacher burnout. First of all, the author discusses the importance of network formation. The main purpose of the article is to help teachers avoid teacher burnout-to maintain a sense of self-control. Teachers can maintain this feeling by focusing on what they can do, rather than what is beyond their control.

Maintaining a sense of self-control also comes from finding a work-life balance at home. The author concludes that the last way to avoid teacher burnout is to find a passion that teachers genuinely care about. This means that teachers are guided by fundamental principles and that they continue to improve on the basis of these principles.

Keywords: acquire language, disturbing problem, lack of support, merry go round, networking, self-determination, finding balance, teaching philosophy.

Over the last 10 years or so, I keep seeing a very disturbing problem. Good teachers, great teachers, keep leaving our profession. The truth is our profession, when done well, is

an exhausting one. Teachers in general are tired. But teachers who understand the importance of acquisition in language learning and the need for students to be able to communicate in English must be engaging, create stimulating activities, and constantly meet the changing demands of unique learners. You become an actor, a coach, a psychologist, a guide. The concept I'm referring to is called Teacher Burnout. Teacher burnout means that a teachers like a candle, try to give and give until they themselves have nothing left. I have seen a lot of teachers last anywhere from three to five to ten years, and the quit: Become car salesmen, Construction workers, Actors. Anything besides a teacher. Why would that be?

Well, of course, in education there are always concerns about salary, lack of support and so forth. But I would suggest that one of the biggest problems comes from the profession itself.

Teaching English is so involved, it has so many moving pieces and it can be difficult to learn how to do well. As I focus on helping students communicate in English, I have learned that I have to be a pronunciation expert, a reading expert,

a writing expert, a grammar expert, a speaking expert and so on. I've taught English to nurses, elementary school students, junior high students, high school students, college students, and business professionals. How in the world can I teach to all of these different groups and be an expert on all of these different things? And each year, it seems, there are new books, new standards, new curriculum and new ways to do the same thing. This field is constantly evolving and revolving and often makes it feel like we are going on a merry-go-round. So how do we step off the merry-go-round and avoid teacher burnout?

Don't be afraid. There are many things you can do to avoid teacher burnout and revitalize yourself, again and again. Let me give you my first tip. Form a network. I had been thinking of teaching as something that I do all by myself, with no one to help me, and the more I thought about it, the more I realized, I was so wrong. There are teachers all around us that have years of experience, lesson plans of their own, and fantastic ideas. I realized that instead of complaining, if I would simply ask other teachers questions, they were quick to give opinions and provide answers.

Don't you know? Teachers love to be asked their opinions about things.

But networking doesn't have to stop there. By going to different forums and communities on the Internet, you will find that language teachers are some of the most social creatures there are. We love to share ideas, ask important questions, and look for solutions to difficult problems. You can join TESEL communities, attend conferences once a year, and travel to different parts of the world where language teachers are. Isn't that a powerful way of knowing things?

And doesn't that make your life as a teacher a lot easier?



Please remember the importance of finding friends who are smarter than you. And how wonderful it is to know that there is someone willing to share ideas anytime you ask.

Let's turn our thoughts to some other principles that can help you to avoid Teacher Burnout. Two researchers, Ellen Skinner and Kathleen Edge, wrote a book about self-determination. And demonstrated that there were two principle factors that helped people to avoid burnout. They said that in order to avoid burnout, teachers need a sense of control. There's no doubt that as a teacher that there are certain things in your control and certain things that are not. If you are teaching in the United States, Japan, Russia, Korea, the United Arab Emirates it doesn't matter.

No matter where you go, you will be able to control some things but not others.

So, to maintain a sense of control, it often isn't so much how much control you have or where you are, but what you do with what you have got. And this is where teachers have to be creative. As teachers, we should spend the majority of our time enjoying the amount of freedom we are given, even if you can't choose your own books, your own tests and your own salary, I wish. There is a lot of freedom you do have to create. Enjoy the opportunities to explore experiment and teach in your style, and in your way. Sometimes you don't have control to do a lot of things that you want and need to do as a teacher and it can be frustrating. Some teachers in many countries are suffering because they don't have enough resources, like textbooks and technology. All these things can limit you and can affect your ability to teach English. But please don't think that because you are limited for now that you will always be limited. Always, always be an agent for change. By focusing on influencing your environment and trying to improve it, you will find that you have better optimism and will have a greater sense of control. You will also realize how willing people are to join you in a cause that matters. Your passion will spring people into action.

Third, the happiest teachers find balance. In moments when you feel yourself lost in the thick of thin things, please take a moment to step outside of the teaching world and be human again. What do I mean by be human?

You may go out for ice cream with your children, take your spouse to a movie, call a friend, spend time doing your favorite hobby. The best teachers in the world that I know are dedicated to their students, but also dedicated to their lives and to making themselves interesting. Having a hobby, enjoying an activity will recharge your batteries and prevent you from seeking out the complainers.

Fourth, the happiest teachers cherish the rewards of teaching. So my last word of advice for you to avoid teacher burnout, is to find your core. Find out why you do the things you do. As I explained earlier, people will join you when they see that there is a cause you believe in. Your students will join you, other teachers will join, administrators



will agree with you, when you find a core value, a core belief that you know is true. What do you do to avoid teacher burnout? Never act, be sincere. Don't confuse this with a lazy attitude to get out of learning new techniques. Of course, you should challenge yourself, and get out of your comfort zone, and learn new things. Finding your core means knowing which metaphors resonate with you, which messages hit hardest with you. It means to know your own teaching philosophy, and then do all you can to be the best within your sphere of knowledge and understanding.

Don't forget to be interesting and learn something new every day. And finally, when you're feeling a bit of burnout, remember and cherish those small rewards, like a card you received from a student. The last technique to avoid teacher burnout is to find a passion that you care sincerely about. Remember, don't be someone else. Be yourself. But be your best self.

That means that you are guided by fundamental principles, and that you continue to improve based on those principles. Remember that as a teacher, you are a candle, and language is a fire.

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