

To embrace, encourage, and empower through a network of Christian educators.

## Just Who Do You Think You Are???

by Marilyn J. Dominick - Retired Public School Teacher/Admin

To this retired educator, this time of year has always been a most wonderful and to be treasured time of the year! As I have stood many times on the sidewalks as the busses rolled in on the first day of school, I have so enjoyed the fresh-faced students and well-prepared teachers who seem genuinely happy to see each other and to get the learning started!

On one crisp September morning a few years ago, a teacher who was new to our district, was excitedly greeting her students as they entered her freshly decorated classroom. In my role as elementary principal, I was visiting her to welcome her to our learning community and to see if she needed anything. As we chatted, I could sense her passion for her students and her true respect for the work she had been called upon to do. She inadvertently made a comment about being "only a teacher". It was said in the context of wanting to have a positive influence on her students, but a realization that she was not their parent nor an administrator who makes building-level decisions. I reassured her that her love for her students and her careful preparations to make every minute count in her instruction would result in a wonderfully positive influence on the lives of the children in her classroom.

So, how about you? Have you ever had that thought, "I'm just a teacher"? The temptation is always there to think that you have minimal impact on anything – that you may be just a small, insignificant piece in the system of education and that what you do every day may make no difference at all.

If you have those thoughts, I respectfully tell you now - you could not be more incorrect about that! Although I spent more years as an administrator than I did as a classroom teacher, there is no confusion in my mind AT ALL about who really does the work of education. It happens in YOUR classroom, every day, consistently and lovingly. You are absolutely essential to the successful lives of children.

I have often said that, second only to parenting, education is the most important business on this planet. Every day, we have a mission field before us, where we are called upon to show Jesus to our students and their families. For some, we are their only hope to break a generational cycle of poverty, immorality, and bad decision-making. We can teach, not only academic curricula, but good decision-making skills that will impact every area of life for our students.

God loves you – the educator – so much (Jeremiah 31:3 ... "I have loved you with a love that lasts forever, I have kept on loving you with faithful love."). He treasures you beyond the level that you can comprehend! If you can get a glimpse of this truth – God loves YOU and wants only the best for you, you will be released and empowered to serve Him with strength and wisdom that can only come from Him. Will that kind of living make a difference in our schools? Absolutely, it will!!!

I challenge you – the next time someone asks about your occupation, reply with a hearty – "I am doing the most important work in the universe – I am a TEACHER!"

My prayer for you is that you will truly realize who you are in God's sight and will teach through the power of the Holy Spirit, surrounded and filled with God's love, every single day of your career.

The whole world will be better for your efforts! You are NOT "just a teacher.

## It's Time to Renew Your Membership in NEW

Nazarene Educators Worldwide supports Nazarene educators in Christian Schools, public schools, private schools, homeschools, global and international schools. It also includes the educators in our universities and colleges who train our teachers. NEW supports the administrators and pastors of Christian Schools.

To renew, or to join Nazarene Educators Worldwide for the first time, visit [www.naznew.org](http://www.naznew.org).



## Why I'll Never Tell My Son He's Smart

Written by Salman Kahn - Submitted by Jan Wilson, Christian School Representative

My 5-year-old son has just started reading. Every night we lie on his bed, and he reads a short book to me. Inevitably, he'll hit a word that he has trouble with. Last night the word was "gratefully." He eventually got it after a fairly painful minute. He then said, "Dad, aren't you glad how I struggled with that word? I think I could feel my brain growing." I smiled. My son was now verbalizing the tell-tale signs of a "growth-mindset."

But this wasn't by accident. Recently, I put into practice research I had been reading about for the past few years. I decided to praise my son not when he succeeded at things he was already good at, but when he persevered with things that he found difficult. I stressed to him that by struggling, your brain grows. Between the deep body of research on the field of learning mindsets and this personal experience with my son, I am more convinced than ever that mindsets toward learning could matter more than anything else we teach.

Researchers have known for some time that the brain is like a muscle; the more you use it, the more it grows. They found that neural connections form and deepen most when we make mistakes doing difficult tasks rather than repeatedly having success with easy ones.

What this means is that our intelligence is not fixed, and the best way to grow our intelligence is to embrace tasks in which we might struggle and fail.

However, not everyone realizes this. Dr. Carol Dweck of Stanford University has been studying people's mindsets towards learning for decades. She has found that most people adhere to one of two mindsets: fixed or growth. Fixed mindsets mistakenly believe that people are either smart or not, that intelligence is fixed by genes. People with growth mindsets correctly believe that capability and intelligence can be grown through effort, struggle and failure.

Dweck found that those with a fixed mindset tended to focus their effort on tasks where they had a high likelihood of success and avoided tasks where they may have had to struggle. This limited their learning. People with a growth mindset, however, embraced challenges. They understood that tenacity and effort could change their learning outcomes. As you can imagine, this correlated with the latter group more actively pushing themselves and growing intellectually.

The good news is that mindsets can be taught. They are malleable. What's really fascinating is that Dweck and others have developed techniques that they call "growth mindset interventions." These interventions have shown that even small changes in communication or seemingly innocuous comments can have fairly long-lasting implications for a person's mindset. For instance, praising someone's process ("I really like how you struggled with that problem") versus praising an innate trait or talent ("You're so clever!") is one way to reinforce a growth-mindset with someone. Process-praise acknowledges the effort; talent-praise reinforces the notion that one only succeeds (or doesn't) based on a fixed trait. (Continued on page 3.)

## You Are Invited

All members of the Nazarene Educators Worldwide are invited to the Nazarene Children's Leadership Conference, Ignite, in Bethany, Oklahoma. The conference will be October 6-9. It will take place at Bethany First Church of the Nazarene. Go to [www.nazcln.org](http://www.nazcln.org) for full details. Rooms are available at the Holiday Inn and Suites. Contact the hotel before September 19 for the special room rates

Speakers include:

Dr. Michelle Anthony has a MA in Christian Education from Talbot Theological Seminary and a Doctorate in Educational Leadership from Southern Seminary. She wrote *Spiritual Parenting, Dreaming of More for the Next Generation, Becoming the Spiritually Formed Family, and The Big God Story*. She co-authored with her husband *A Theology of Family Ministry*. She has 25 years of church ministry and leadership experience.

Megan Hutchinson is a youth minister of 20+ years, a national speaker, and founder of thinking 320®. She received her Masters in Theology with an emphasis in Youth and Family Ministries from Fuller Theological Seminary. She served for 9 years at Saddleback Church in Lake Forest, California. She authored the *Life Hurts—God Heals Ministry*.

Dr. Brian Haynes serves as Lead Pastor at Bay Area First Baptist Church in League City, Texas. He is the creator of Legacy Milestones—a strategy designed to inseparably link church and home to equip the generations. He authored *Shift: What It Takes to Finally Reach Families Today* and *The Legacy Path: Discover Intentional Spiritual Parenting*. Brian graduated from Baylor University, Southwestern University, and Liberty Theological Seminary where he earned a Doctor of Ministry for his work in discipleship and family ministry.

Kyle Owens has served as Pastor of Worship Arts at Bethany First Church of the Nazarene for 10 years. He is a gifted musician, vocalist, and worship leader.

This Ignite Conference will provide times of worship, inspiring speakers, workshops, and fellowship. See the website for complete details.



## Why I'll Never Tell My Son He's Smart

(Continued from page 2.)

We have seen this on Khan Academy as well. Students are spending more time learning on Khan Academy after being exposed to messages that praise their tenacity and grit and that underscore that the brain is like a muscle.

The Internet is a dream for someone with a growth mindset. There is unprecedented access to endless content to help you grow your mind. However, society isn't going to fully take advantage of this without growth mindsets being more prevalent. So what if we actively tried to change that? What if we began using whatever means are at our disposal to start performing growth mindset interventions on everyone we cared about?

This is much bigger than Khan Academy or algebra — it applies to how you communicate with your children, how you manage your team at work, how you learn a new language or instrument. If society as a whole begins to embrace the struggle of learning, there is no end to what that could mean for global human potential.

And now here's a surprise for you. By reading this article itself, you've just undergone the first half of a growth-mindset intervention. The research shows that just being exposed to the research itself (for example, knowing that the brain grows most by getting questions wrong, not right) can begin to change a person's mindset.

The second half of the intervention is for you to communicate the research with others. We've made a video that celebrates the struggle of learning that will help you do this. After all, when my son or anyone else asks me about learning, I only want them to know one thing. As long as they embrace struggle and mistakes, they can learn anything.

You can view the original op-ed in Huffington Post at <http://huff.to/1oOn0Ra>.

# Nazarene Educators Worldwide

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Embrace  
Encourage  
Empower

## How Important Is the Number 3?

by Beula Postlewait

There are many common phrases with the number 3.

Bad news comes in threes.

The third time is a charm.

Three strikes and you are out.

Two's company, three's a crowd.

You have three wishes.

Three leaves, let it be.

Win the triple crown.

The three wise men brought three gifts.

He shot a three-pointer.

Did you learn Newton's Three Laws of Motion?

Goldie Locks met the three bears.

The use of the number 3 is also found in the Bible. The concordance provided these and other examples:

Genesis 6:10—"Noah had three sons: Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

Exodus 23:14: "Three times a year you are to celebrate a festival to me.

Ecclesiastes 4:12: "A cord of three strands is not quickly broken."

Matthew 12:40: "For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of a huge fish, so the Son of Man will be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth."

Matthew 18:20: "For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them."

Matthew 26:34: "'I tell you the truth,' Jesus answered, 'this very night, before the rooster crows, you [Peter] will disown me three times.'"

1 Corinthians 13:13: "And now these three remain: faith, hope, and love. But the greatest of these is love."

The Trinity is made up of three Persons—God, the Father, God, the Son, and God, the Holy Spirit.

A Challenge for September: Find 3 ways to witness to your students or co-workers—either in a silent witness through your actions and lifestyle or a verbal witness. You have 30 (10 x 3) days to accomplish this task.

God bless you as you find 3 ways to witness for Jesus this month.

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