***Motivating & Managing Hard to Reach, Uninterested and Disruptive Students***

***Power Struggles Unplugged***

***The Teacher That Changed My Life***

By:

Brian D. Mendler

**®**

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## BRIAN MENDLER

Biographical Information

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Brian Mendler is a K-12 educator and special education teacher with extensive experience working with challenging students in general ed, self-contained, and inclusion settings. He provides staff development training for K-12 educators and youth service workers throughout the world with the focus on how to be successful with even the most difficult students. Mr. Mendler has recently authored a book titled, *That One Kid.*  This book provides practical, in-depth ideas for working with unmotivated and disruptive students. He has authored or co-authored four other books, *The Taming of the Crew, Power Struggles, Strategies for Successful Classroom Management* and the national best seller *Discipline With Dignity 3rd Edition: New Challenges, New Solutions.*

Brian continues to volunteer with the Big Brothers/Big Sisters and Special Olympics programs.

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**Prevention Phrases:**

“Some of you in this classroom are going to do and say rude, nasty, inappropriate mean things. I know you are. I just want to let you know right now that I WILL NOT always be stopping my lesson to deal with it. It doesn’t mean I didn’t hear it, because probably I did hear it, and it doesn’t mean I am not going to do anything about it, because probably I will do something about it. I believe in consequences and there will be consequences in this classroom this year. However, to some of you in the moment it might look like I am ignoring a certain behavior. That’s how it might look to some of you. But trust me I am not. It just means I think teaching is more important in that moment. Is there anything you do not understand?”

“There are going to be many times this year that I the teacher drop by your desk to deliver a private message that is only for your ears. For example, I might drop by your desk (pick a student) and say, ‘knock it off.’ Then I might continue teaching and I might drop by your desk (pick a different student) and say, ‘you are doing a great job on your homework and I am really proud of how well you are doing in this class. Keep up the amazing work!’ Some of you might wonder what I said and start asking me, ‘what did he say? What did he say? What did he say?’ Trust me when I tell you, I will drop by your desk just as often as I drop by everyone else’s desk. But remember, I will not be sharing that message with the entire group

**Power Struggles are Always About the Same Thing:**

* The student does not want to look bad in front of the class.
* The teacher does not want to look bad in front of the class… So we argue.
* Remember to be a “Second to last word person!”
* Try to keep your kids in class.
* Get back to teaching.
* Stop the behavior.
* Remain calm.
* Allow student to *Save Face*.

Notes:

**Eight Steps to Defusing any Student:**

1. Become a 2nd to last word person.
2. Recognize the battle is about to happen.
3. Use humor.
4. Use PEP (privacy, eye contact, proximity).
5. Listen (hear what the student is saying, not how they are saying it).
6. Acknowledge (let them know you hear them).
7. Agree (let them know that they are or might be right).
8. Defer (we will discuss this at a later time).

Notes:

**Five W’s of Defusing**

* **“Whoa!”** - as loud as I can to get their attention
* **What -** let the student know what is happening. “You and I are about to argue right now.”
* **Why –** it’s always the same reason. “You don’t want to look bad in front of your friends and neither do I.”
* **When –** do not leave him hanging! “So let’s talk about it right after class, thanks.”
* **Walk –** then move…Get out of there. Do not stick around for a response!

**Why Students Misbehave:**

* **Awareness** (literally unaware they were doing it, i.e. The Pen Tapper)
* **Seeking Attention** (either gets tons of attention at home or no attention at home)…
* **Lack of feeling Power/Control** (always being told what to do. Eventually becomes frustrated)
* **Lack of feeling Competence** (does not do well academically in school).
* **Lack of Belonging** (either does not belong to any group or belonging is defined through disruptive behavior)

Notes:

**Embrace and Use Creative Teaching**

### Strategies:

### Wild Card question.

### “I’m Good At” Board.

### “50/50” and “Ask the teacher.”

### Songs that teach.

### Carpet on the desk.

### Wheel of Misfortune?

### Fantasy sports that teach content?

### Music Stands.

### Pick a Test.

Notes:

**3 Places to Build Relationships**

* **In Class** (When you have the student).

Strategies: 1. 2x10.

2. Let them talk.

3. P.E.P.

* **In School** (When you don’t have the student).

Strategies: 1. In the hallway.

1. In the cafeteria.
2. In other classes.

* **Outside of school** (My favorite).

Strategies: 1. Be seen at events.

1. Stop by work?
2. Phone calls home.

Notes:

**2x10**

* 2 uninterrupted moments.
* 10 consecutive days.
* The goal is to build a relationship between yourself and a student.
* This conversation does not need to be about school.
* Be sure your other students are working on something during this time.

Notes:

