

## Make a Difference: Be the Difference!

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## Be the Difference!

“Be the change you wish to see in the world.”  
(Mahatma Gandhi)

“Everyone thinks of changing the world, but no  
one thinks of changing himself.”  
(Leo Nikolaevich Tolstoy)

## The Secret of Happiness

“The purpose of life is not to be happy - but to  
*matter*, to be productive, to be useful, to  
have it make some difference that you have  
lived at all.”  
(Leo Rosten)

“In about the same degree as you are helpful,  
you will be happy.”  
(Karl Reiland)

## Get Your Priorities Straight!

“To put the world right in order, we must first put  
the nation in order; to put the nation in order,  
we must first put the family in order; to put the  
family in order, we must first cultivate our  
personal life; we must first set our hearts right.”  
(Confucius)

“He has the right to criticize who has the heart to  
help.”  
(Abraham Lincoln)

## Start Today!

“How wonderful it is that nobody need wait a  
single moment before starting to improve the  
world.”  
(Anne Frank)

“Act as if what you do makes a difference. It  
does.”  
(William James)

“Unless someone like you cares a whole awful  
lot, nothing is going to get better. It's not.”  
(Dr. Seuss)

## Differences Don't Have to be Huge

“We must not, in trying to think about how we can  
make a big difference, ignore the small daily  
differences we can make which, over time, add up  
to big differences that we often cannot foresee.”  
(Marian Wright Edelman)

“We can do no great things, only small things with  
great love.”  
(Mother Teresa)

### Things You Can Do to Make a Difference at a Personal Level

- Take good care of yourself (the airline principle)
- Develop another professional skill
- Volunteer to be a Big Brother or a Big Sister
- Coach a community sports team
- Get training in crisis prevention/intervention
- Become a Red Cross volunteer
- Set a good example at work and in the community
- Know the literature on the relationship between mental health service delivery and student achievement and use it (If we can teach reading...)
- Work on learning another language

### Living Well Makes a Difference

“Love the earth and sun and animals,  
Despise riches, give alms to everyone that asks,  
Stand up for the stupid and crazy,  
Devote your income and labor to others...  
And your very flesh shall be a great poem.”  
(Walt Whitman)

### Things You Can Do to Make a Difference at the School Level

- Call and/or meet with parents
- Write thank you notes  
(<http://www.nasponline.org/membership/ecards/index.aspx>)
- Have a web site and publicize it
- Get to know school staff members by name
- Write letters of introduction when you are assigned to new schools
- Attend open houses and set up a table
- Pass out cards
- Volunteer to do trainings and workshops

### More Things You Can Do to Make a Difference at the School Level

- Ask to be on school advisory committees
- Attend PTA/PTO meetings
- Be a good listener – “If you listen to them, they will respect you.” (Dalai Lama)
- Be the grown up in your schools to whom kids and parents can talk
- Write an article for the school newsletter
- Set an example as a lifelong learner
- Make your reports exist for the recommendations
- Go the extra mile. It’s never crowded.

### No One is Good at Everything

“I am only one, but I am one. I cannot do everything, but I can do something. And I will not let what I cannot do interfere with what I can do.”

(Edward Everett Hale)

“It is the greatest of all mistakes to do nothing because you can only do little - do what you can.”

(Sydney Smith)

### Things You Can Do to Make a Difference in Your District

- Write to each school board member and tell them what you appreciate about what they do
- Offer to do presentations at principals' and teachers' meetings
- Send an e-mail to the superintendent telling him or her how much you like being a school psychologist
- Become active in your local school psychology association

## More Things You Can Do to Make a Difference in Your District

- Offer to share any special expertise you have with other school psychologists
- Run for a local political office
- Connect with a nearby university to teach or to do research
- Become the school psychology representative to your teacher's union or collective bargaining unit
- Volunteer to serve on the district's mental health planning committee (or to start one)
- Start or join a crisis intervention team in your district

## Think Outward to Make a Difference

"The greatest good you can do for another is not just to share your riches but to reveal to him his own."

(Benjamin Disraeli)

"The first question which the priest and the Levite asked was: 'If I stop to help this man, what will happen to me?' But... the good Samaritan reversed the question: 'If I do not stop to help this man, what will happen to him?'"

(Martin Luther King, Jr.)

## Things You Can Do to Make a Difference at the State Level

- Become actively involved in your state association
- Get to know your state legislators
- Write/call/visit your legislators, the governor, and the courts about issues important to education and mental health
- Join your state association's legislative efforts
- Give talks on school psychology as a career to undergraduate university classes
- Work to get appointed to state advisory committees in your area(s) of interest

## More Things You Can Do to Make a Difference at the State Level

- Contact your state school psychology consultant to ask how you can help
- Get to know the difference makers in the state Department of Education and offer to collaborate with them
- Contribute to your association's charitable activities and to the PAC or CCE
- Ask to be on an association committee in your area of interest

## Making a Difference is Contagious

"Each time a man stands up for an ideal, or acts to improve the lot of others, or strikes out against injustice, he sends forth a tiny ripple of hope... and crossing each other from a million different centers of energy and daring, those ripples build a current that can sweep down the mightiest walls of oppression and resistance."

(Robert F. Kennedy)

## Things You Can Do to Make a Difference at the National Level

- Join and become active in NASP (<http://www.nasponline.org/membership/getinvolved.aspx>)
- Get to know the NASP web site
- Connect students and their families with NASP resources
- Get to know your federal legislators
- Keep abreast of the issues
- Write, call, or visit your legislators and the president about issues of importance to your students, your profession, and yourself

## More Things You Can Do to Make a Difference at the National Level

- Get trained in the NASP PREPaRE curriculum
- Write an article for the *Communique*
- Write to APA officials about the Model Licensure Act
- Share and gain expertise using the NASP e-communities (<http://www.nasponline.org/communities/default.aspx>)
- Be a lifelong learner

## Things to Notice About This Presentation

- Not a single time was RtI mentioned
- There was no recommendation to test more kids
- You were not asked to relinquish your WISC kit
- Not once was there a reference to the shortage of school psychologists
- We didn't discuss the sad state of mental health service delivery in the world
- We did talk about small things which can make a big difference

## Major Issues for School Psychologists

- The Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) members were polled in 2007 about the biggest concern in schools. Too much testing was specified by 52%, while only 15% indicated that school violence was the greatest concern.
- The APA Model Act for the State Licensure of Psychologists
- Debate over the value of cognitive assessment

*"To laugh often and much; To win the respect of intelligent people and the affection of children; To earn the appreciation of honest critics and endure the betrayal of false friends; To appreciate beauty, to find the best in others; To leave the world a bit better, whether by a healthy child, a garden patch, or a redeemed social condition; To know even one life has breathed easier because you have lived. This is to have succeeded."*

(Ralph Waldo Emerson)