

A Thank You Note to Teacher

By John Tucker, PhD ACG ADHD Coach

ADHD can be a challenge in the classroom. It takes forethought, intuition and endless patience for teachers to accommodate all the ways students differ. Great teachers who manage that miracle of reaching out to everyone and also each one make a good and lasting impression on those they teach and their work echoes and ripples for ages.

In this, my first article as Chair of CADDAC, I imagined a teen age student writing a thank you note to just such a teacher. I will, in future articles, return many times to variations on the theme of student/teacher relationships since these are pivotal.

Dear Sir,

Thank you for not sending me out of class today when I got into a shouting match with Jane. Sometimes I really hate her even though she is my very best friend. I know I am a pain because I can never sit still and no matter how hard I try I can't help blurting stuff out. You know that's my ADHD at work. It's not me.

Somehow you know that my being disruptive is not meant to be insulting. I wish everyone understood that. Sometimes I get in big trouble for saying things and doing things I absolutely did not mean to. But you know the difference. You always give me a chance to think over what's going on. You never scream at me because you know that that would be the worst possible thing to do. You never nag at me because you know that would shut me down. You always make me feel as though I am somebody worthwhile, that my ideas matter, that I matter.

You are calm. You are the wisest teacher I ever had. You allow all of us to be different and you use our differences to make the class a happy place. Even Jody, who's the meanest person I ever met, listens to you and does his work in our class. It's not great work but you always give him a smile and encouragement.

I love the way you always have different things going on in class so it's never deadly dull and boring (well almost never, LOL). The other day when you dumped all those novels on the floor and made us wait to get one, saying it was for a big study was weird but it worked. I never believed that I would ever see our class scrabbling over one another to get a book. Other teachers nagged at us to read but you made it exciting. I still can't believe Jody and Margaret arguing over that stupid book. Neither one of them ever read a book in their life but you made them eager to do that. Wow!

Yours truly,

Your favourite student

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