

## Book Review—

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***Invitational Teaching, Learning and Living*** by William Watson Purkey and Paula Helen Stanley. Washington, DC: National Education Association. 1991. (paperback)

Purkey and Stanley embrace the encircling issues of school reform by beginning *Invitational Teaching, Learning and Living* with a warning that the mind is but one part of the whole person. They remind us that the heart cannot be forgotten in the process of change, nor can the classroom be overlooked as the essential environment that supports positive learning experiences.

As is typical in most of Purkey's work, a clear and concise overview of "invitational thinking" is presented in this book. The four basic elements of invitational theory are described carefully and with examples appropriate to the classroom teacher. A new addition to the invitational literature is the "IDEA" inclusion. Throughout the book, there are specific examples, practices, reminders, and suggestions that are called: IDEA. The acronym stands for I = inviting, D = Descriptors of, E = Exciting, and A = Activities. Teachers will find the IDEA approach a very useful one, as the suggestions are both specific and practical.

Chapter Three focuses upon the four levels of professional functioning. Readers who have delved into invitational literature will find that the description of the four levels sound familiar. In fact, there is substantially little difference in the treatment of the four levels in this text from other works produced by Purkey and his associates (Purkey & Novak, 1984; Purkey & Schmidt, 1987). Readers who need a review of the levels of functions and examples for teacher-student relationships will find this chapter provides a satisfactory summary. However, this reviewer found little that was new or expanded in this section. The authors might have considered a more extensive description of the functions with application in the classroom as the primary focus of this chapter. Differentiating between how the levels would affect various roles in education might have been an interesting addition.

The remainder of the book highlights the Four Corner Press, the Powerful 5 Ps, and the Rule of the Five Cs. Though the Four Corner Press is best known for its basketball connection, Purkey and Stanley relate

personal and professional invitations with the same gusto shown by a well-drilled team. It is their contention that teachers often overlook the tremendous effect of the untapped potential inside each individual student. Focusing on ways to capitalize on this strength, identifying important feelings, strengthening friendships, and staying alive professionally are a few of the issues masterfully examined in the last half of the book. The "5 Ps" again review basic invitational concepts of people, places, policies, programs and processes. There is less space provided for these topics, yet the treatment of the "5 Ps" is adequate. The "5 Cs," which deal with concern, confer, consult, confront, and combat, provide important cues for the classroom teacher to assess at different points of decision making and interaction with students. The hints in this last section are truly helpful in times of stress. It is a section to be read several times to remind us of such simple ideas as: "Try not to make decisions when you are Hungry, Angry, Lonely, or Tired." It is too easy to overreact or use poor judgment in those cases. The authors point out that the first letter of each word spell HALT. In this section, the suggestions related to HALT are practical reminders for teachers to stop and think before they act.

Purkey and Stanley attempt to reach an important audience with this book. Every classroom teacher would love to summon all the wisdom developed between its cover, and be successful in the classroom. This work provides both the impetus and research to support an approach to school reform that attends to the whole person and includes an understanding of the multiple invitations that influence student learning and development. This is an uplifting book, one to be included in every school's professional library.

## References

- Purkey, W. W., & Novak, J. M. (1984). *Inviting school success: A self-concept approach to teaching and learning*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

Purkey, W. W., & Schmidt, J. J. (1987). *The inviting relationship: An expanded perspective for professional counseling*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

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