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The Daffodil Principle

The other day I read a story about a "Daffodil Garden" that gave me some tremendous insight into how some people always seem to accomplish so much with the time they have, while others are confused, stressed out and never seem to have enough time to get anything done.

The " Daffodil Garden " was located on the side of a mountain. It was a magnificent scene. One of the most beautiful sights you could imagine. It looked as though someone had taken a great vat of gold and poured it down over the mountain peak and slopes where it had run into every crevice and over every rise. The mountainside was radiant, clothed in massive drifts and waterfalls of daffodils. The flowers were planted in majestic, swirling patterns, great ribbons and swaths of deep orange, white, lemon yellow, salmon pink, saffron, and butter yellow. Each different-colored variety (there were more than thirty-five varieties of daffodils in the vast display) was planted as a group so that it swirled and flowed like its own river with its own unique hue.

A charming path wound throughout the garden. There were several resting stations, paved with stone and furnished with Victorian wooden benches and great tubs of coral and carmine tulips. Five acres of flowers! All planted one bulb at a time, by one woman who lived in a little house on the side of the hill.

This lady had started planting one bulb at a time for a period of thirty five years. She once had a vision of beauty and joy, imagining the mountain covered in flowers. Instead of "wishing" she decided to begin bringing her vision to life on that mountain.

In the lady's own words, when asked how she created such an immense garden, she answered, "One at a time, by one woman, two hands, two feet, and a very little brain."

And this is what we call "The Daffodil Principle".

Regardless of your dream or vision, there is no other way to do it. You have to do it one bulb at a time.

There are no shortcuts. If you set out on a journey, it begins with the first step. Then you take the second step, and the third, and so on. Before you know it, you have traveled a long way from where you began and you just keep on going.

The sooner we all learn to accept the "Daffodil Principle" the better. When you continuously move forward, one step at a time - and at times it is with a baby-step - we use the accumulation of time to accomplish so much. We can actually change the world in which we live. Just think about all you can accomplish in time.

It makes me think back to all those things I wanted to do but abandoned, simply because it seemed as if it would take so much effort and time to accomplish my ultimate goal. Think of all the books I could have read if I had only read one chapter per day instead of trying to find several hours at a time to read. Think of all the letters I could have written to family and friends if I had only written one letter a week (I could have kept in touch with 52 different friends each year). Think of how many people I could have made feel wonderful, if I had taken the time to give one sincere compliment per day to a stranger.

THE ONLY WAY TO SURVIVE IN TEACHING IS TO ADOPT THE DAFFODIL PRINCIPLE

The Daffodil Principle should be required reading by all teachers at the beginning of every year - or perhaps at the beginning of every day!

You have a lot of long-range and unit plans for your students. You have individual plans and daily plans and special education plans and professional development plans...are you getting tired yet? And if you spend time going over all of those times the tasks will seem enormous.

If you simply begin, one task at a time; one week at a time; one day at a time; the job will get done. And at the end of the year, you will look back and see a beautiful "Daffodil Garden" in full bloom. The journey begins today. Just start planting and you will be amazed at what you can accomplish.

For a video version of The Daffodil Principle on You Tube, go to the following link:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bFM36LIEEy0&feature=related>

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