

Staci Maule

After watching "When the Chips are Down," I immediately got emotional. The ending was far more profound than I imagined it was going to be. There was something about the idea of how many chips it takes to prevent suicide or gang violence that resonated with me. I think the analogy of chips or "bucket filling/ dumping" needs to be discussed more. The world is unfair, filled with violence and political rage; I feel more than ever that my students need to know that they are valued and loved for at least the eight hours that they are with me. I love speaking to my students about how our actions/ words change how people feel- simple actions make big waves. As Lavoie was speaking about this analogy, I like how he paired it with a message of the importance of advocacy. I believe as a teacher; it is my job to advocate for each of my students whether they have LD's or not; when they are added to my class list, I instantly become their cheerleader. I always try to connect with my students' interests and attend sporting events, dance recitals, or support them in any outside-of-school event possible. Just as I would cheer for them in the stands of a soccer game, I will cheer for them when they sound out words or figure out a math problem.

Maybe I am a classic "participation award"-gen-z teacher, but I genuinely feel that everyone needs to be celebrated whenever possible. It has always been strange that many teachers still use clip charts or flip cards as classroom management systems, especially when paired with trivial rewards. When I was in first grade, my teacher incentivized good behavior with a movie on Fridays. Every Monday, she would show us the cover of the DVD and set it up on the board, so we knew what to look forward to, this worked for weeks when I wanted to see the movie, but if I were uninterested, I would talk out of turn and not care because the reward was meaningless to me. As an educator, I find more value in explaining why certain behaviors

are important for our setting. For example, when the teacher is talking, I shouldn't be because it is not kind to speak when someone is talking, we might miss something valuable to us, and we might distract our friends who want to learn from learning. A consequence of this behavior in my room would be after three warnings; they move to sit somewhere to focus better. I make sure to say it like that "(child's name) please go sit at the table in the back so you can focus on what we are learning and not miss out," and I ask them by going up to them and crouching down. I have found this method to be much more effective and respectful to my students.

Another critical point in the video that Lavoie made was that students with LDs struggle to learn academics in the same way they also struggle with impulse and behaviors. When he read the quote that highlighted the idea that we use behaviors and impulsiveness to support an LD diagnosis, we don't use them when we make decisions to punish them or teach them behaviors. Unfortunately, this is still true; often, teachers will complain about a student with ADHD for presenting off-task behaviors but then expect them to be on-task all the time and grow frustrated when they do not transition back quickly. Sometimes I want to say, "well, yes, Mrs. Smith Jimmy, the student with ADHD might need more than one reminder to return to his reading group." As Lavoie said, it is the same reason he got his diagnosis. Similarly, if a child broke their leg, they would need more time to return from lunch, and I have never heard a teacher complain about that. Students, in general, need reminders, chances, and clear boundaries. In the video, Lavoie mentioned that the farmer doesn't have time to build a fence; he is too busy chasing the cows. That same situation occurs when teachers neglect to reteach simple tasks like hand washing- spend the time now to spend less time then.