Creating Positive Outcomes

FOR ALL YOUNG PEOPLE

A FOLLOW-UP RESOURCE GUIDE TO

Don't Doubt the Dream!

PRESENTED BY

Teacher, Singer/Songwriter

JERRY MILLS

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Educator and Singer/Songwriter

Notes and highlights from my

Don't Doubt the Dream

keynote presentation

A note from Jerry...

After attending my keynote, I'd love to hear your feedback and thoughts on the presentation and what it meant to you. Feel free to email me: jerry(at)jerrymills.com

You can find me on the web: http://www.jerrymills.com
On YouTube: http://www.youtube.com/boomzinger

Years ago I was asked to present a keynote address for my professional peers in my home community of Marquette, MI.

It took shape starting with four words on a Post-it note...
Don't Doubt the Dream

Ordinary Me No More

I've got a lifetime of experience
stored inside my head
A kaleidoscopic mixture of the things
I've done and seen and heard and read
but in my heart and soul is where I chose to hide
when it always was as simple as choosing to decide

Hi, it's me... hello, it's me!
I can't be an ordinary mean no more
I won't be an ordinary me no more
Because I'm not an ordinary me no more.

I spent a lifetime of thinking,
thinking a billion thoughts inside my head
a kaleidoscopic mash up of the things
I've done and seen and heard and said
way deep down inside, I hid myself away
but I am here to tell you that can all and here today

Hi, it's me... hello, it's me!
I can't be an ordinary mean no more
I won't be an ordinary me no more
Because I'm not an ordinary me no more.

Ordinary Me No More
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Ordinary*:*

- normal or usual: not unusual , different or special
- not very impressive

Extraordinary*:*

- very unusual or remarkable, very different from what is normal or ordinary
- going beyond what is usual, regular or customary; unusually great *:*

Spark (One Single Second)

One single second in the course of time
can be one we'll remember for the rest of our lives
when people come along and they leave their mark
all in the goodness of their… Spark

One single second of a minute soon to be
an hour in your life, a day in your history
seven days, a week, a month, a year, a life
each second but one sand through your hourglass of life

One single second in the course of time
can be one will remember for the rest of our lives
when people come along and they leave their mark
all in the goodness of their… Spark

Time ebbs and flows, like tides upon the shore
Sometimes we're all right. Sometimes we want more.
Sometimes when we do
Life has a crazy way of... shining through
Sometimes in our lives...
Sparks take us by... Surprise!

One single second in the course of time
can be one will remember for the rest of our lives
when people come along and they leave their mark
all in the goodness of their…
When people come along and they leave their mark
all in the goodness of their… Spark!

Spark/One Single Second
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Glasser's *Five Needs*

SURVIVAL
LOVE & BELONGING
POWER
FREEDOM
FUN

- Choice Theory (Dr. William Glasser)

The Characteristics of a Resilient Youth

Thinks for self and can solve problems creatively
Can tolerate frustration and manage emotions
Avoids making other people's problems their own
Shows optimism and persistence in the face of failure
Resists being put down and negative labels
Has a sense of humor and can forgive and forget
Builds friendships based on care and mutual support

- Reclaiming Youth at Risk (Brendtro, Brokenleg, Van Bockern)

"No printed word nor spoken plea
Can teach young minds what they should be.
Not all the books upon the shelves
But what the teachers are themselves."

- Rudyard Kipling

"Any student repeatedly faced with a task in which they believe they cannot be successful will become oppositional!"

-Sharon Weiss

Acting Out Behaviors

The Conflict Cycle

(Nicholas Long)

A model for understanding how interactions between students and adults follow a circular process that mutually and continuously affect each other.

According to this transactional paradigm:

- ➥ a stressful situation starts a chain of events that can lead to a behavioral crisis.
- ➥ student's behavior following a stressful situation can directly influence the attitudes, feelings, and behavior of the adult.
- ➥ left unresolved, conflict cycles multiply, intensifying the feelings and polarizing the behavior of both the student and the adult.

The conflict cycle contains five steps.

1. **A negative self-image** in student makes them highly vulnerable to stress.

2. **Stressful events** are interpreted in a manner to cause (3)

3. **Uncomfortable feelings,** which drive an emotional rather than rational response.

4. The **behavioral response** tends to be primitive, regressive and defensive in nature. Often involves aggression directed at the adult. The aggression can take the form of verbal abuse, overt noncompliance to directions, destruction of property, etc..

5. The **adult reaction** may entail taking the student's defiant behavior personally, and ultimately reacting emotionally as well.

According to Long:

"One of the most amazing concepts of interpersonal relationships is that young people in stress can actually generate their own feelings and, at times, their behavior in others." Their feelings/behaviors can be CONTAGIOUS!

Key Points about the Conflict Cycle

- ➥ Chances for successful outcomes from these negative exchanges are almost nil
- ➥ Predictably, the behavior of both teachers and students often continues to escalate into more aggressive and counteraggressive interactions
- ➥ Breaking the cycle is hard work for adults as well as students
- ➥ To do so, adults must recognize the developing pattern and intervene ASAP
- ➥ This involves learning alternative ways of thinking, feeling, and behaving

The Acting-Out Behavior Cycle

Walker, Colvin, and Ramsey

A seven-phase process in which the interdependent dynamics of adult-student responses can either heighten or de-escalate the conflict.

1. Calm Phase -

Behavior is cooperative, compliant, and desirable.

2. Trigger Phase -

Behavior involves a series of unresolved problems or stressors.
May be things others don't PERCEIVE to be a problem.
If those problems are not resolved at this stage, students will move to the next phase.

3. Agitation Phase -

Behavior is unfocused and off-task.
Agitation can be manifested by either increases or decreases in student behavior:
darting eyes, restlessness, subdued language, or withdrawal from groups.

4. Acceleration Phase - ("Your Turn! My Turn!")

Behavior is adult-engaging.
The baiting stage, with observable behaviors such as:
whining, avoidance, threats, verbal abuse, and destruction of property.
If left unchecked, unsupported, or worse - met with counter aggressive reactions such as threats, yelling, or disrespectful verbal communications such as put-downs - the cycle can escalate further.

5. Peak Phase -

Characterized by behavior that is out of control and dangerous to self and others.
Assaults, self-abuse, and destruction of property are common.
As the crisis ebbs, the student enters the sixth stage.

6. De-escalation Phase -

Displays confusion.
Avoidance of discussion, withdrawal, denial, and blaming others...

7. Recovery Phase -

The behavior has run its course and returns to a nonagitated state.
The person may still be subdued and defensive, particularly during debriefing.
Someone in this phase shows an eagerness for busy or independent work.

New Thoughts on Learning Styles

According to Dawna Markova, a leading researcher in learning styles, each person's brain *organizes*, *remembers* and *creates* using three very different pathways -

auditory (A), visual (V) and kinesthetic (K).

These combine to form one of six possible patterns of perceiving and learning.

She describes the six following styles of learners:

AVKs (*organizes* Auditorily, *remembers and processes* Visually and *creates* Kinesthetically)

- Highly articulate and adept at describing their thoughts.
- May have difficulty being alone or knowing what they actually feel in their bodies.
- Jokes and humor may be second nature.
- But listening to others for a long time or doing something the same repeated way may be a chore.

AKVs (*organizes* Auditorily, *remembers/processes* Kinesthetically and *creates* Visually)

- Words come very easily and are full of feelings that bubble right beneath the surface.
- Often very highly energized, even "pent-up."
- Good at giving orders. Like taking action on their own.
- Impatient with people who can't say what they mean.
- They don't read frequently, but deeply absorb what they see.

VAKs (*organizes* Visually, *remembers/processes* Auditorily and *creates* Kinesthetically)

- Great storytellers.
- Skilled at teaching, selling, using metaphors, and telling themselves both sides of a story.
- How they are viewed by others is very important.
- Can remain still for long periods of time, and may be reticent to be touched casually.
- Eye contact is important.
- They learn by seeing or reading, then discussing, and lastly, doing it themselves.

VKAs (*organizes* Visually, *remembers/processes* Kinesthetically and *creates* Auditorily)

- Feel what they see and learn by watching and then doing.
- Find it very difficult to speak without using their hands, and may talk in circles.
- Often feel pulled in several directions at once and navigate through life by asking questions.
- May become healers, architects, artisans, writers.

KVAs (*organizes* Kinesthetically, *remembers/processes* Visually and *creates* Auditorily)

- Often soft spoken, they tend to work best in solitude.
- Can balance disparate elements in their lives and see things from many perspectives.
- Integrity is all important.
- May have difficulty talking and doing something at the same time; given the choice, they'd rather do.
- Others' words may be overwhelming.

KAVs (*organizes* Kinesthetically, *remembers/processes* Auditorily and *creates* Visually)

- Often thought of as jocks due to seemingly limitless physical energy.
- Don't show what they're feeling on their faces and may be "eye-shy," but quite affectionate.
- Can't seem to think without moving or jiggling.
- They rarely read instructions on how to do something - would rather just figure it out.
- Being of use is all important.

Dawna Markova, Ph.D.
How Your Child IS Smart... A Life Changing Approach to Learning
Also in *The Open Mind* - Conari Press

What You Can Do... Strategies...

Research has consistently shown that teachers play a *vital* role in the future success of students with attentional and behavioral challenges. Successful treatment involves the full cooperation of teachers and parents working closely with other professionals. However, considering the tremendous amount of interaction between teacher and student, the importance of the *teacher's* role *cannot* be overestimated.

A complete discussion of practical strategies and accommodations in the regular education classroom is beyond the scope of this document. The following four groups of interventions should serve as a good starting point:

1. **Strategies for Structuring the Learning Environment**
2. **Strategies for Modifying Instructions**
3. **Strategies for the Assignment of Tasks**
4. **Strategies for Behavior and Self-Esteem Enhancement**

Strategies for Structuring the Learning Environment

In order to better meet the needs of many struggling students,
teachers are encouraged (and often times required) to make certain
accommodations in the learning environment.

➥ While the actual type of classroom is important to the learner, **having a considerate and understanding teacher** who uses consistent methods, routines and input **will have a much greater impact than just environment alone.** Matching the right teacher with the student can often be the single best predictor of success for that student.

Consequently, this teacher will need to have a good understanding of individual needs, be tolerant of the individual differences, be willing to go the extra mile and be able to manage their behavior in a flexible and non-accusatory manner. The teacher must be willing and able to accept the challenge this student presents and be willing to work around the inherent problems without feeling put upon or resentful.

➥ With regard to the general organization of the classroom, challenging students with attentional problems **thrive on predictability and routine.** Their most unorganized behavior is likely to occur during free time. A sympathetic and understanding teacher who is consistent in methods, feedback and daily routines is probably more important than the actual type of classroom.

➥ Seat student near teacher's desk, but include as part of regular class seating. Students with attentional problems often seem to benefit from sitting as close to the teacher as possible.

➥ Place student up front with back to the rest of the class to keep other students out of view. In cooperative teams, position desk to minimize distractibility.

- **Surround the student with "good role models."**
  Preferably students that the child views as "significant others."
- **Encourage peer tutoring and cooperative teaming.** One-on-one is most effective!
- **Avoid *distracting stimuli*.**
  Try not to place distractible student near air conditioner, heater, high traffic areas, doors or windows.
- Many challenging students don't handle change well so **avoid unpredictable transitions,** changes in schedules, physical relocation, etc.
- Be creative! Produce a "stimuli-reduced study area." Let all students have access to this area so the challenged child will not feel different.
- Parents are encouraged to set up appropriate study space at home with routines established as far as set times for study, review of completed work, and periodic notebook and/or book bag organized.

Strategies for Modifying Instructions

To further assist the student, teachers are encouraged to make certain modifications **in the delivery of instructions** to the student.

- Help the student feel comfortable with seeking assistance.
  Many students won't ask - they feel awkward when they don't "get it."
- Instead of asking, "Are there any questions?" when checking for understanding, use phrases such as **"What questions do you have?"** Make it CLEAR that questions are appropriate and expected much of the time!
- **Maintain eye contact** with the student during verbal instruction.
- **Make directions clear and concise.** Be consistent with daily instructions.
- **Simplify complex directions.** Avoid multiple commands.
- Make sure student **understands instructions before beginning** the task.
- When possible, **have them repeat the directions back to you**.
- Repeat in a **calm, positive manner,** if needed.
- Challenging students often need more help for a longer period than the average child. However, they seem to respond more positively when they realize the teacher is willing to take the time to assist them! Gradually reduce assistance.
- Require a daily assignment notebook if necessary.
- Teachers are encouraged to post any homework assignments in a consistent manner and in a consistent location to encourage students to write down the assignments on their own before leaving for the day.
- Make sure student correctly writes down all assignments each day.
- Parents and teachers may even sign notebook daily to signify completion of homework assignments. However, allow student to complete work independently before resorting to this measure. Many students may resent the need for signing.

➥ Parents and teachers may use notebook for daily communication with each other. However, it may be necessary for the parent and teacher to assist the child in "remembering" to bring the notebook to and from school. Some teachers and parents even arrange to have a separate set of textbooks at home (if they are available) to avoid books becoming lost en route.

Lesson Presentation

Use the principles of effective instruction when delivering lessons. Make sure that students are successful and challenged. Model multiple cognitive strategies such as "think aloud" techniques that help students verbalize the thought processes they should engage in to complete the task. Cooperative groupings can also be used effectively. Finally, give praise and feedback immediately and consistently.

Suggestions for maintaining student involvement in the lesson include the following:

* **Keep lesson objectives clear.**
* Deliver the lesson at a **brisk pace.**
* **Encourage collaboration** among students.
* Use **meaningful** materials and manipulatives.
* Prompt for student answers after **allowing at least 5 seconds of wait time.**
* Have the students recite in unison.
* **Vary your tone of voice and model enthusiasm.**

There are additional ways you can accommodate the student's learning characteristics and needs when designing your lessons. For example, if the student has a short attention span, you might accommodate this by modifying the length of the material. The following are examples of additional accommodations:

* Break up long presentations by **"chunking"** content. At the end of each chunk, have the student respond in some way.
* Provide the student with **additional time** to finish an assignment or test.
* Break down assignments into "mini-assignments," and build in reinforcement as the child finishes each part. Consider passing out longer assignments in segments.
* Reduce the number of practice items that the student must complete. For instance, allow the student to stop once he or she has demonstrated mastery.

Strategies for Assignment of Instructional Tasks

➥ Give out only **one task at a time.** It is often helpful if the student's teacher can divide the work load into smaller units. Students with attention deficits get easily overwhelmed by what they perceive to be large amounts of information or complex instructions.

➥ **Monitor the student frequently.** Use a supportive attitude. Avoid "hassling" tone.

➥ **Modify assignments as needed.** Consult with other staff to determine specific strengths and weaknesses of the student. Develop a sound individualized educational program.

➥ When assessing progress, be sure you are testing knowledge and not attention span.

➥ For those students who take medicine, be aware of the time of day when tests and more difficult assignments are given. Just before lunch and toward the end of the school day may be problematic times for these students since the medical effectiveness may be diminished or worn off.

- **Allow additional time for certain tasks.** Challenged students may work more slowly. Don't penalize for needed extra time. They may sometimes be entitled to this under federal law...

- Keep in mind that challenged children are easily frustrated. Focus on reducing the frustration. A key step is to **help the student stop their "negative self-talk"!**

- Stress, pressure and fatigue can break down many student's self-control and lead to increased inappropriate behaviors. Some students often respond positively when asked to do errands or tasks for the teacher in the classroom. This helps break up the monotony of their day into smaller units and offers some release for their frequently high energy levels.

Strategies for Behavior and Self-Esteem Enhancement

- In order to avoid offering negative feedback in front of a student's peers, teachers should **develop some covert signs or signals to communicate to the challenging individual when their behavior is appropriate or inappropriate.** Such signals might be a wink of the eye, a tap on the desk or a touch on the shoulder. The teacher's willingness to work cooperatively with the student while avoiding public feedback often yields tremendous response!

- Challenging students often experience significantly less success in school than their peers. Therefore the **teacher must work to ensure that the child is viewed as being successful not only by the child's classmates and teachers but by the child him/herself.** Perhaps you'll need to build upon initial small successes. But feeling successful is of the utmost importance to turning around the learning experiences of these students.

"Nothing succeeds like success!"

- Challenged students often appreciate regular constructive feedback from the teacher about how they are doing. The operative word is "constructive." Feedback must not sound accusatory or overly negative or you risk further damage to already low self-esteem. Avoid, at all costs, use of the words "good" and "bad" in describing behaviors. Instead use terms such as "in control" vs. "out of control" or "appropriate" vs. "inappropriate."

- **Have preestablished consequences** for misbehavior. Review them regularly and be consistent in use of or enforcement of these rules.

- **Administer consequences immediately** and monitor proper behavior frequently.

- Discipline should be appropriate to "fit the crime," without harshness and emotion.

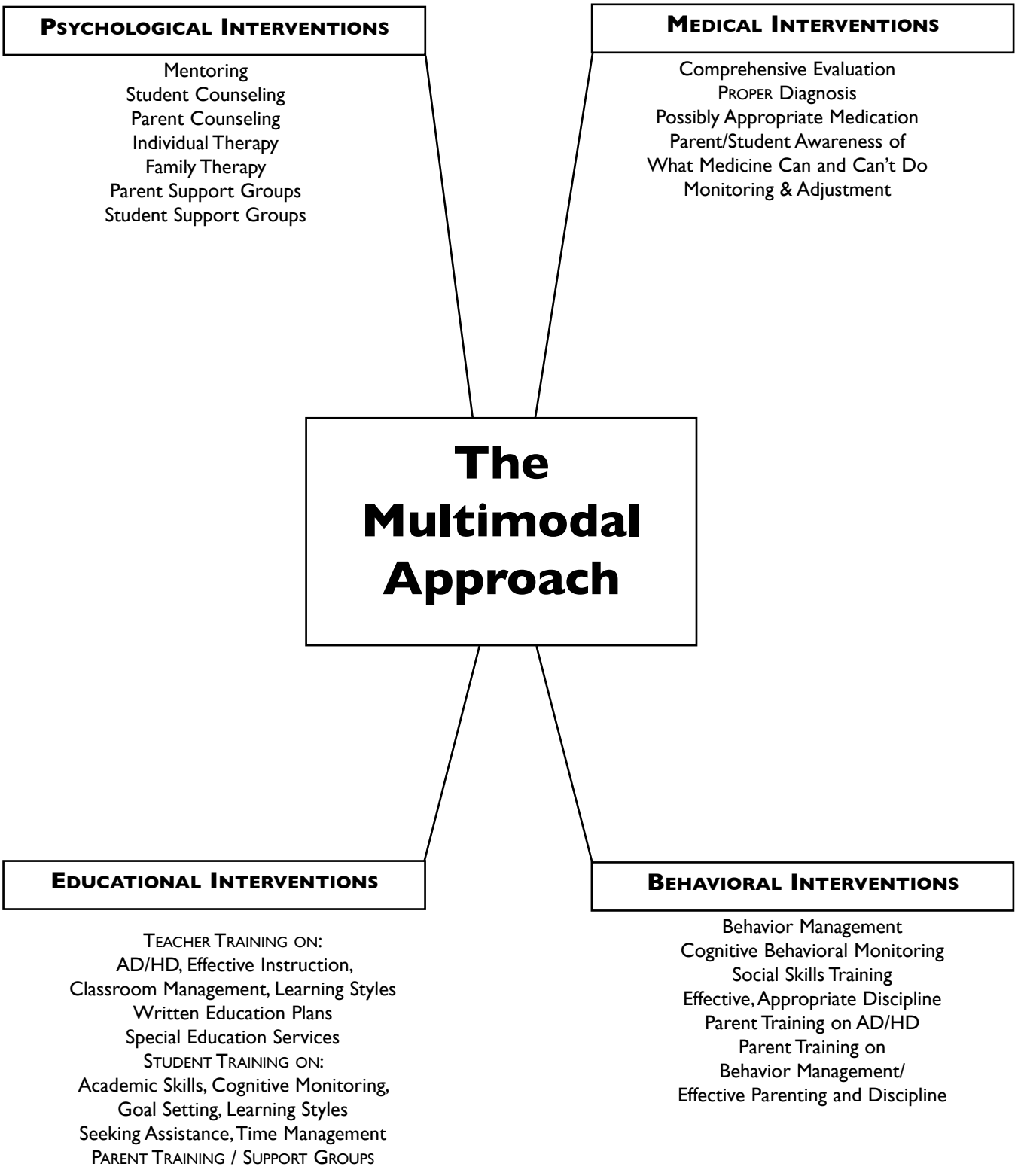
- **Avoid ridicule and criticism** at all costs! Remember, these children have difficulty staying in control. Public humiliation should always be avoided. Teachers should always try to avoid being too critical of students in front of their peers since such peer humiliation is often one of the major detriments to self-esteem and to motivation of the learner.

- **Never publicly remind ANY students to "take their medicine."** Teachers should adjust their expectations for students when it is obvious that their attention is drifting and, once again, should try to avoid being too critical of them in front of their peers. For students who may be on medication, it is extremely important that the teacher not call attention to the student's use of medication. Comments concerning medicine can often have devastating effects on students. Often, such comments are the reason some adolescents refuse to take their medicine.

The Multimodal Approach

The misconception exists that AD/HD and other neurobiological conditions are treated simply with medicine. While medicine may often be an important treatment option for some students, a multimodal team approach to treatment planning is most effective in addressing all of the needs of ANY student facing serious challenges. This team frequently involves parents, teachers, physicians, behavioral or mental health professionals, and others who are familiar with the student and whose input can increase the likelihood of successful outcomes.

The four cornerstones of this treatment program are listed below with just a few possibilities for interventions listed under each.



What You See

It's the first day of school, and I can hardly wait
to meet my teachers for the year.
I wonder if they've heard what I was like before?
What kind of stories did they hear?
Cuz I've had a lot of problems
with some of my teachers in the past.
But this is gonna be a great year,
At least I hope it is at last !

And when I finally meet my teachers
When that school bell rings today
I'm gonna ask them just one question
and I wonder what they'll say...

"Teacher, tell me what you see...
Won't you tell me what you see?
Teacher, tell me what you see ... in Me !"

I'm the first kid at the school, cuz I can hardly wait
to meet my teachers for the year.
I wonder if they know about what I was like before,
or am I finally in the clear?
Cuz I've had a lot of problems
with some of my teachers in the past.
But this is gonna be my best year,
At least I hope it is at last !

And when I finally meet my teachers
At the beginning of the day
I'm gonna ask them for a favor
and I wonder what they'll say,

"Teacher, tell me what you see...
Won't you tell me what you see?
Teacher, tell me what you see ... in Me !"

What You See
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The Real You

You are the only one who knows
the real you, that's how it goes.
This person who you're learnin' to be
No one but you will ever see...
When you see yourself through your own eyes
Do you see someone with no disguise?
Cuz you can't disguise yourself, it's true,
Or you'll never become the real you...

Chorus:
So do not be afraid
when you have a choice to make
Trust yourself enough
to let you learn from your mistakes.
Your life can be a bumpy ride
when you have the power to decide
But believe in all you say and do
And you'll become the real you!

You are the only you you've got,
You cannot be who you are not.
And you must live life to figure out
What your life is all about...

What you like and what you don't...
What you'll do and what you won't...
Cuz the one thing you are here to do
Is to become the real you!

Bridge:
How can anyone but you claim to know
Which choice that you should make,
Or which way you should go?
So when someone tries to tell you what to do...
Remember, they don't know the real you!

Chorus...

The Real You
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Don’t Doubt the Dream

I’ve got pockets full of post it notes covered with words
From thoughts I’ve encountered, things that I’ve overheard
And I fill up my pockets each day, all day long
With words and ideas and possible songs.

So I emptied my pockets when I got home today
To read once again what the post it notes say.
But I only found one note with only one line;
Just four simple words in search of a rhyme.

And I’ll tell you the line if you promise that you
will do what the message is calling you to.
It’s just one lonely line, but it’s more than it seems -
The line on the post it note says“Don’t doubt the dream!

”Don’t doubt the dream or it’ll never come true,
Your dream is the work you’ve been longing to do.
So just shoulder your burdens, they’re as light as they seem
And do what you must do but don’t... Don’t doubt the dream!

Like an old locomotive running full steam ahead
We’ve gotta follow our dreams and see where we’re led.
We’ve got so much potential and so little time,
But the future looks bright if we follow the line...

And I’ll tell you the line...

Don’t doubt the dream! Cuz it’s the best you can be,
Your dream is the you that you want them to see.
You can show the whole world
that you’re more than you seem

If you do what you must do, but don’t...
Just do what you must do, but don’t...
You’ve gotta do what you must do, but don’t...
Don’t doubt the dream!
Don’t doubt the dream.....or it’ll never come true!

The Line
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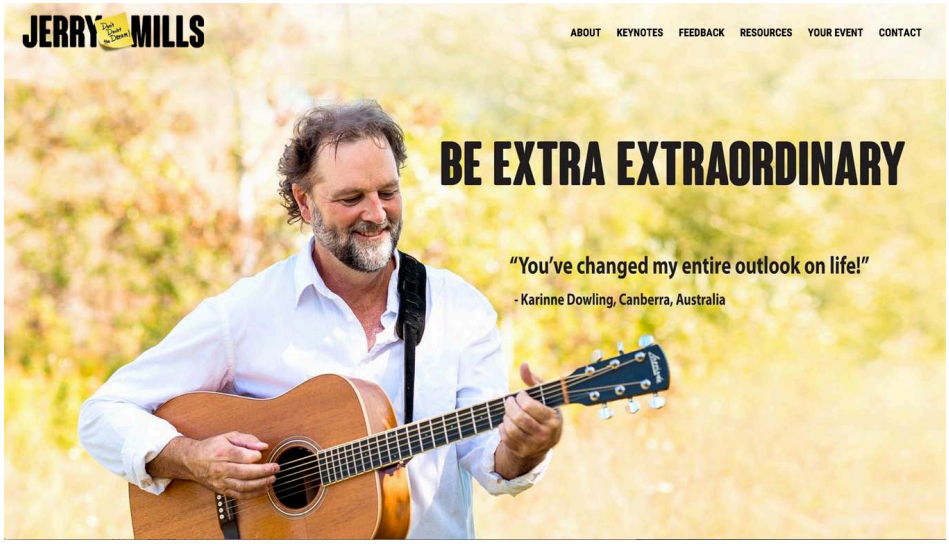

A note from Jerry:

Thanks for being part of this experience!
Perhaps you know others who may be interested in bringing
my live presentations to their conference or organization.
Please contact them and invite them to visit www.jerrymills.com.

I’d love to hear from you.
You can email me at jerry(at)jerrymills.com