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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

TEACHERS ARE EXHAUSTED

Let's just get one thing out of the way: the decade of the 2020s has been hard. It's been exhausting. This has been true for everyone, but it is especially true for people who work in people-oriented professions – nursing, teaching, pastoring, just to name a few. But, this is about teachers.

I keep reading reports about the mass exodus that is happening in education. Recently, in my state, it was reported that [22% of teachers are ready to walk out](#). There are teachers in my building who feel the same way. It breaks my heart. But I get it.

Do we get paid enough? Absolutely not. Do we have people NOT TRAINED or EXPERIENCED in an education setting the expectations for us? Unfortunately, yes. Do we comply? Most of the time. How many hats do we wear? More than I can count. Do we get paid enough? Absolutely not. Should we be the villains when we are working harder for your kid's grade than he/she is? Nope. But there's more. We are the only profession that makes life harder for us to take care of ourselves if we are out. We are the only profession where we feel guilty for taking care of ourselves.

So, teachers are quitting. Some aren't even waiting for the semester break. But, we shouldn't fault them. They need to take care of themselves – their mental and emotional health is more important than showing up to a job that causes breakdowns. I get it.

While processing all that I have read about teachers leaving, I have a few ideas for teachers on the brink:

1. Revisit your WHY. Why did you become a teacher? Why do you stick it out? Is your WHY strong enough to keep you where you are?
2. Take time to invest in your students – not just as students, but as people. Get to know their families, when you can.
3. Find all those notes you have kept over the years – the ones from students, parents, coworkers, etc. Find those notes and compile them into a notebook that you keep handy. Then, read those notes. Read them and remember that what you do matters.
4. Know that there are students for whom you have made a difference. I know it sounds cliché, but you really might be the only one to smile at a kid today. You might be the one who notices that something just isn't right and talks to that student. You might be the only one who offered grace to them today.
5. Take care of yourself. It's okay to leave work at work. It's okay to take a day or two to rejuvenate yourself. You can't do your job if you are empty.

SUMMARY

Teaching the only profession that makes life harder for them if they take care of themselves. They are the only profession where they feel guilty for putting their needs first.

Perhaps those things aren't enough to make you stay. You will be missed, but I get it. I hope you find your WHY in whatever you do.

For those who aren't teachers:

1. Be quicker to encourage than to criticize. We are hard enough on ourselves – we don't need further criticism.
2. Know that most of us do this teaching thing because we love kids. We love YOUR kid.
3. Remember that you would, likely, never do your job for the kind of pay we get. But you wouldn't have your job without a teacher (or a few) in your world.
4. Pay us like it matters who your student hangs out with every day. Pay us because we matter.

Ultimately, I think the vast majority of us love our jobs. But, two things exhaust us – being the villain every day and getting paid a fraction of our value. Teachers are worth it.

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