



Transformative early childhood professional development products and services

Professional Development Tip#4 ***Touchstones***

I often feel as though I'm the last one to know or learn something. Ever feel like that?

Well, about a year ago, I attended a Center for Courage and Renewal (<http://www.couragerenewal.org/>) retreat, and learned about these things called "Touchstones."

I'm sure many are familiar with the term...but it was new to me...

As I came to understand, there are many uses of the term "*touchstone*". The most general of which, is "a tangible or intangible thing to compare to and determine quality."

Touchstones can be thought of as:

- A pledge or promise to establish a sense of belonging and identify shared values
- A set of universal values and aspirations
- A guide for decision making
- A living creed to support and build a community of learners

I see setting or co-creating ***touchstones*** as a spin on setting ground rules during PD.

See below for the PPT slide I've been using when delivering early childhood professional development.

Touchstones

- Breathe
- Move
- Be inspired
- Inspire others
- Be curious
- Share



Here are a few more examples of touchstones taken/adapted from a variety of sources, including the Center for Courage and Renewal (<http://www.couragerenewal.org/touchstones/>):

- Be engaged and fully present as possible
- Embrace differences and be open to learning from each other
- Make space to pause and reflect to deepen your thinking
- Allow ideas to be developed further by others
- Accept that we will sometimes fail, but will learn together and move forward
- Balance our yearning for change with patience for the process of change and growth
- No fixing, saving, advising or correcting each other
- Observe deep confidentiality

One of my favorite *touchstones* is "When the going gets rough, turn to wonder."

Here are options for using *touchstones* when delivering professional development:

1. Embed applicable *touchstones* into your PPT or Prezi presentation.
2. Incorporate *touchstones* into an icebreaker activity.
3. Select a handful of the *touchstones* to incorporate into a coaching agreement.
4. Co-create *touchstones* with participants, which ensures "buy in" and applicability to the situation

As always, I'm interested in hearing from you, and would love to learn how you have used *touchstones* to help define clear boundaries for the work you do. So...be sure to come back to the B2K blog and share your stories and adventures.



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