

**Zig Tribute
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Sir David R. Hawkins, world-renowned psychiatrist and author, has identified several characteristics of a genius.

1. Geniuses Have Minimum Wants – Zig claimed the smallest office at EB, in the basement with no windows.

2. Geniuses Are Eccentric – I asked him, Could your stenosis have come from an accident? He thought about it and answered, There was this time on my motor cycle on icy overpass by Tuscola when my bike spun out of control and I was thrown 30 feet and landed on my back.”

3. Geniuses Are Dedicated To Their Craft and have enormous drive – Zig worked 24/7. He is one person who would like to have been able to spend part of his last days in the office.

4. Geniuses Have A High Degree of Insight – An editorial in the Houston Chronicle included an interview of a recent graduate of a local teachers college. She loved her training. She concluded, “the only problem is that when I got a job teaching, they brought me the wrong kids.” Here was Zig’s response to student failure: “They were not stupid kids; I was a naïve teacher” This insight lead Zig to transform education in at least eight fundamental ways.

1. In the past, many believed that IQ is fixed, cannot be changed and that the IQ of Blacks is lower than whites: Engelmann and Bereitier demonstrated that 4-5 year-old, Black at risk and disadvantaged preschoolers could gain an average of 24 IQ points and perform at a second grade level in reading and math.

2. In the past many believed that children with Down syndrome could not learn to read. In the 1960s Zig and Linda Meyer demonstrated that Down syndrome children could learn to read.

3. In the past many believed that severely cognitively delayed adults could not live outside of institutions. Influenced by Zig, Rob Horner and George Singer working with others such as Dan Close demonstrated that severely cognitively delayed adults could live with some degree of independence in group homes, outside of institutions.

4. In the past many believed that DI only taught the basics. In 1969 the largest educational experiment in history, Project Follow Through (FT), involved 200,000 students in 178 diverse communities in comparing 22 different instructional models for K-through 3rd grade. The education experts were furious. DI students performed the highest not only in basic skills but also in higher order cognition and in the affective domain.

5. In the past there was a belief among medical practitioners that people who sustained brain injury reached a "plateau" and really couldn't improve. Working with Zig, Ann Glang and colleagues showed that using smart instruction, these kids and adults could both recover old skills and learn new ones, leading to improved academic, employment and quality of life outcomes.

6. Prior to the 1970's there was little in the way of systematic instructional materials for teaching indigenous Micronesian students to read their own languages. Influenced by Zig in the early 70's, over the past 47 years Sue Rice Moses has helped local teachers and her students at the College of Micronesia develop strategies and materials for teaching reading in 16 plus indigenous languages.

7. In the past many parents were worried that their young child would not learn how to read. Zig, Phyllis and Cookie wrote **teach your child to read in 100 easy lessons**. On Amazon it has almost 2000 five-star ratings, ranks 411th out of almost 2 million books sold. The book is

- #1 in [Family Activity](#)
- #1 in [Language Experience Approach to Teaching](#)
- #3 in [Parenting & Family Reference](#)

The 8th and final transformation. Zig's DI tools have allowed hundreds of thousands of teachers to touch the minds of millions of students. But this last transformation includes a gift that is often overlooked. Here is an example of that gift. A close friend of our daughter Berkley is married to Richie, a Jamician who could not read. I listen to my remarkable wife Linda teach Richie to read over Skype. Full of encouragement, Linda says, "Good job, Richie but let's read that story one more time." And with heart-felt gratitude, Richie responds, "Yes, maam." DI allows Linda to touch not only Richie's mind but also his heart. And Richie touches Linda's heart. Many of you here know what I mean by this gift—take a moment to remember a time using DI that you touched the heart of a student and the student touched your heart. Zig's great overlooked gift is allowing millions of teachers and students to touch each others' hearts and thereby share the milk of human kindness. So Zig, thank you for opening wide the faucet to flow out the milk of human kindness.