

Zig's Memorial Talk
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For those of you who do not know me, I am Gary Davis. My late wife, Karen, and I worked with Zig for almost as many years as we were married – 45 +. Needless to say our marriage was a little more harmonious. I want to tell you a story about a 3 year adventure I with Zig. Back in the day, we had 3 schools in Utah. Zig saw a problem when he visited the schools. He saw 3rd grade and above students not involved in learning immediately when school started and he saw they didn't understand the importance of working hard and getting smart the entire day. So he went back to Eugene and wrote a program to teach the kids important information – bones, muscles, solar system, states in the United States, , etc. This program was organized into units. At the end of the units the kids took a mastery test. When they passed, they got a gold seal on a certificate. When they got five seals, they got special recognition from their teacher and principal. Ten seals they got a bronze metal. 15 seals earned a silver metal. – NO gold. Remember, this is Zig to say he was frugal is an understatement.

The first year Zig and I went to Utah to recognize the kids achievements and give out the metals. We flew to Salt Lake. Drove north. Visited the school the next day. Observed the teaching, debriefed with the staff, and had an assembly with the kids. Zig gave a speech, we congratulated the kids, shook their hands and were off. I drove about six hours south to the next school and Zig ate pretzels.

We got up the next morning and headed for a school, observed, debriefed, had an assembly, Zig gave the SAME speech, gave out the metals, shook a lot of hands. Next morning, we got up, drove to the last school, observed, debriefed, had an assembly, Zig gave the SAME speech, gave out metals, shook hands. I'd drove the 4 hours to the airport and Zig ate pretzels.

The next two years we repeated the pattern. We went to all three schools, observed, debriefed, had an assembly, shook a lot of hands, Zig

gave the SAME speech. I drove and he ate pretzels. The only difference was more parents showed up and kids started wearing the metals that they had earned the previous years. Kids were proud of being smart.

After hearing this the SAME speech NINE times, I reached mastery. I think I had mastery at six, but Zig is Zig. I think the speech defines the gift that he gave us. Yes, the speech was to kids so there was no swearing. This year you grew maybe this much on the OUTSIDE. (Show with two fingers.) Maybe this much on the OUTSIDE. But on the INSIDE you grew THIS much, (Show with two hands.) You grew THIS much. You worked hard. You learned a lot of things – bones in the body, circulation system, solar system, oceans and continents. You GREW this much INSIDE. You worked hard and you got smart.

This is the gift that Zig left us.

All the authors, editors and people who worked directly with Zig grew THIS much on the INSIDE. It couldn't be helped. You had to work hard. You had to learn new things.

All the implementers like myself working with teachers on how to teach the program, learned THIS much on the INSIDE. WE learned how to demonstrate, how to practice with teachers, and yes be sensitive and diplomatic. We also learned how to say bullshit under our breath. All the teachers who taught his programs learned THIS much on the INSIDE. They learned that all kids could learn if taught well. I have heard countless times "all my kids learned to read this year. I didn't know it was possible." They learned how to teach.

And last, Kids learned THIS much on the INSIDE. They learned to work hard. They learned to be successful. They learned to be smart. This is Zig's legacy. His gift. Everyone he touched even indirectly learned THIS much on the INSIDE. And this is power. You can't turn it off. Thanks Zig for helping us grow this much.

One final thought. After 3 years of riding around with Zig, I asked him why pretzels. "Pretzels make you pee less on long trips."