



The Heart of Staff Development

A Guide to Using “Courage” Books with Teachers and School Leaders

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We become teachers for reasons of the heart.
But as time goes by, many of us lose heart.
How can we take heart, alone and together,
so we can give heart to our students,
which is what good teachers do?

For the past twenty years the field of staff development has sought new approaches to supporting public school teachers and leaders. With this guide we hope to contribute to that process by suggesting ways to enhance staff development through the resources found in a “bundle” of Jossey-Bass books: *The Courage to Teach*, *The Courage to Teach Guide for Reflection and Renewal*, *Stories of the Courage to Teach*, *Teaching with Fire*, and *A Hidden Wholeness*.

These books are the core texts of the Courage to Teach movement that has unfolded over the past decade, guided by the Center for Courage & Renewal. The Circle of Trust[®] approach (or Courage work, as it is often called) has given tens of thousands of teachers

and school leaders inspiration and guidance at a challenging time in the history of public education. In some thirty states and fifty cities, one hundred sixty facilitators prepared by the Center have worked with more than twenty-five thousand people in public education and other serving professions over the past decade. That on-the-ground experience, in which the themes in these books have been interwoven with the daily lives of K–12 educators, provides the experiential foundation for what we offer here.

Here’s a quick overview of what you will find in the four sections that follow this introduction:

- A section that maps our understanding of the lay of the land in staff development these days, its challenges and its potentials
- A section that spells out our sense of what the books in this collection have to offer staff developers and the teachers and school leaders with whom they work
- A few examples of ways that the materials in these books, in various combinations and permutations, might be used by staff developers in working with K–12 educators
- An appendix containing thumbnail sketches of the contents of the books that are bundled with this guide

We offer this guide and these books with deep gratitude for the many good people who serve our young people in the public schools of this country. We think of them as our “culture heroes”—our true “first responders”—because daily they deal with children whose lives are profoundly affected by all of the political, social, and economic problems that we adults collectively seem to lack the wit or the will to solve.

We marvel at how many teachers and administrators serve children so wholeheartedly despite the fact that teachers are so often used by politicians, the press, and the public as scapegoats for a variety of social woes. If the words on these pages can help public school educators “take heart” so that they can continue to “give heart” to their students, we will be grateful.

THE STATE OF STAFF DEVELOPMENT

The most important job in our public schools is educating our children. The second most important job is supporting teachers and school leaders in ways that deepen and sustain their capacity to educate children—the job called *staff development*. As we have learned over the past decade by working with people who know more about this work than we do, staff development

is undergoing rapid change in both its on-the-ground realities and its visions of what might be. Three elements characterize this change:

1. *Although the language of staff development is all about improving teaching and learning, the field is under intense pressure to be all about improving students' scores on high-stakes standardized tests.* As every good educator knows, these two goals—although not inherently contradictory—are not the same. Much depends on how the two are held in relation to each other. If the obsession with scores leads to such things as eliminating or short-changing important subjects that are *not* on the test (such as music and art) or “teaching to the test” in the subjects that *are*, the ultimate losers are real education, real children, and real teachers.

We believe that there are ways to hold real education and good testing outcomes together—and that making this case and acting on it is part of good staff development. One of us had a child who was struggling and failing in most academic subjects in middle school. By happy accident, that school had a gifted art teacher who quickly learned that this child had genius in his hands when it came to pottery. The self-confidence that this middle schooler gained through art soon started translating into more success in academic subjects. Today he has a doctorate in microbiology and runs a university-based research lab focused on finding a cure for HIV/AIDS.

More to the point in relation to staff development is that we know that teaching children to pass a test teaches them no more than how to pass a test and that what they learn is easily forgotten as soon as the test is over; we also know that classrooms and schools laced with the fear that comes from high-stakes testing and high-pressure teaching and learning tend to freeze students' brain, as fear always does. If we can frame both teaching and learning in ways that relieve rather than ramp up the fears of both teachers and students, it stands to reason that in the long run we will get better educational outcomes, including higher test scores.

2. *Staff development these days is moving away from designated, district-level staff developers who travel around leading in-service workshops “after hours.”* Instead, staff development at its best is increasingly understood as a school-based function led by building administrators or teacher-leaders whose goal is to create professional on-site learning communities in the midst of the work that educators are constantly doing.

Most teachers we have talked with over the past decade have given, at best, mixed reviews of traditional add-on, stand-alone staff development workshops—especially those led by a “sage on the stage.” Like thoughtful professionals in many fields, those with the wisest voices in staff development have long understood that what we need is not only the reflections of outside experts but also the input of “reflective practitioners” within the profession. We need educators who can learn more about their work in the course of doing it, then fold that learning back into the next iteration of their work, and do all of this in a community of peers who teach and learn from one another.

Adults do their best learning in the same way that children do: not by having information dumped into their heads but by interacting with a subject, with one another, and with themselves in an engaged learning environment. The principles underlying all of this are simple: we do our best learning in a cycle of activity and reflection, and although some of that learning is and must be individual, we also need to take what we learn into a community of discourse where we can sort and sift it, because all of us together are smarter than any one of us alone. Also, when teachers learn in this way, it is likely that they will teach this way as well.

Of course none of this will happen automatically or by accident. It requires structure, discipline, purposefulness, and leadership. The goal of staff development is to create individual and collective learning opportunities that are both inviting and challenging, in which people feel safe to examine their own practice daily, sharing failures as well as successes for the sake of increasing everyone's capacity to teach well. In the books bundled with this guide you will find a great deal of guidance regarding the sort of leadership required to create that kind of learning environment for adults.

3. *The on-site, real-time professional learning community that constitutes the ideal form of staff development is an exercise in vulnerability.* One of the last things that professionals in most fields want to do is open their practice, and thus their problems, to the scrutiny of peers.

This reluctance to be vulnerable is compounded in teaching, which is one of the last bastions of professional "privatism." If you are a trial lawyer or a surgeon, you have no choice but to do your work in front of other professionals who know much or all of it as well as you do. But as the old saying goes, a teacher's classroom is his or her castle, and that castle often has a moat around it! Traditionally, when the bell rings, teachers close the door on their work and do it out of sight of fellow teachers.

We need to *deprivatize* practice because when teachers become isolated in this way, the outcomes for both teachers and students are sad. Teachers fail to grow their craft because they lack the challenges, conversations, and examples that growth requires, and the interpersonal trust required to form a learning community with their peers atrophies. When people spend years and years working in relative isolation from one another, relations become distant at best and distrustful at worst; and when that happens, our collective capacity to educate the young stagnates or declines.

There is solid evidence behind that claim, to say nothing of common sense. A study of school reform in Chicago during the 1990s showed that a high level of *relational trust* was the primary driver in schools that succeeded in raising students' scores on standardized tests as that decade went by. Schools with low levels of relational trust were much more likely to plateau or even decline in their capacity to educate children, as measured by testing.¹

¹ Anthony S. Bryk and Barbara Schneider, *Trust in Schools: A Core Resource for Improvement* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation Publications, 2004).

That finding is important enough, but here is one from the same study that is even more important: the relationship between student success and relational trust—teacher to administrator, teacher to parent, and teacher to teacher—held strong no matter what happened with other variables such as money, models of governance, state-of-the-art curriculum and teaching technique, and so on. You can throw a lot of money at a school with low levels of relational trust, and if the latter is left unattended, you will not get good outcomes for kids. Conversely, a school that is unfairly deprived of material resources can do great things for kids if relational trust is high.

This study is important for a wide variety of reasons, including the fact that it tells us that factors over which we normally obsess when worrying about school improvement (such as money) can be trumped by a factor that often gets dismissed as marginal or “touchy-feely” (relational trust).

So this study offers strong evidence that disciplined attention to “soft” factors such as trust can pay off handsomely when it comes to “hard” outcomes such as test scores. Common sense tell us this—who doesn’t know that a building full of people who distrust one another will do nothing with big money but fight over it?—yet we keep overriding common sense when it comes to thinking about how to do our work better.

There is one more finding from this study that deserves attention before we move on. As noted a moment ago, this research looked at relational trust in schools in three sets of relationships, and where do you think they found the most difficulty in establishing relational trust? Unlike what many people imagine, the answer is not teacher-to-administrator, nor is it teacher-to-parent.

This research found that the most difficult relationship in which to build trust is teacher-to-teacher—which takes us to our final point as we explore what we believe is required of the process called staff development.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT FROM THE INSIDE OUT

The on-site, real-time learning community of peers that staff development aims to create will not reach its full potential if trust is not created between and among teachers—which is a difficult place to create it, it turns out. The emerging model of staff development will fail to create better schools for both students and teachers if leaders do not give proper attention to the “soft” but critical variable of relational trust.

Some of what Courage work or the Circle of Trust approach can offer staff development is best seen by taking a close look at what needs to be cultivated *within* people if relational trust *between* people is to be achieved. Because we live in a culture that majors in external rather than internal reality, we often try to solve problems—including subtle problems like distrust—by doing external work. Take, for example, the trust-building exercises famously

done at workshops, in which a group is blindfolded while one person who is not blindfolded leads them in a conga line through an obstacle course, or one blindfolded person is asked to fall backward into the waiting arms of several colleagues.

Relational trust, rightly understood, is built on inner foundations that can be laid only by doing inner work. It requires such things as the capacity to get my own ego out of the way long enough to see that you and I can collaborate rather than compete. Relational trust requires that both of us take the risk of being vulnerable to each other, knowing full well that hurts can come from opening up to each other, but also knowing that there can be no real relationship when we refuse to take that risk. Relational trust requires an inner activity called *forgiveness*, in which I forgive you for getting crosswise with me—or myself for getting crosswise with you—so that we can take next steps together rather than apart.

We think of the Circle of Trust approach as “staff development from the inside out,” and we believe that this way of looking at things is implicit in the word *development*. We can be grateful that the staff development function is not called “staff repair” or “staff fixing-up” or “staff remediation”—or any other term suggesting that teachers lack the capacity to grow from within and therefore stand in constant need of expert knowledge from without.

Development assumes that people have inner qualities and capacities to be, well, developed. In the thesaurus, synonyms for *develop* include *grow*, *evolve*, *flourish*, *blossom*, and *ripen*. All of these words assume the unfolding, from the inside out, of an organic reality, which a person surely is, which makes genuine staff development more like gardening than manufacturing. The most effective approaches to school improvement begin with this insight: a school, like every human community, is a web of resources and relationships no less delicate, and no less resilient, than any natural ecosystem.

As you will discover when you explore the Courage books in this collection, our understanding of how “inner work” is done—although it does not exclude solitude (a necessary component of a healthy life)—emphasizes the importance of doing it in community. Also, because inner work makes us vulnerable, the Circle of Trust approach focuses on ways to create the relational trust that makes doing vulnerable things with others as safe and risk free as it can possibly be.

For example, we teach people how to explore a sensitive personal issue—the fear of being judged, for example—by discussing a poem on the subject. People can safely say all kinds of things about a sensitive topic like that by talking about the poem rather than about themselves. In the process, they are exploring themselves and helping one another do the same thing. After a while, as safety is established, people can start attaching their names to what they say, if they wish.

In our minds, issues like the fear of being judged have much to do with staff development, even if the connection is not immediately visible. Remember, this is inner work, which means it deals with the root system of our external behaviors—and root systems are almost always underground and therefore invisible.

Good staff development involves teachers learning new and better ways to practice their craft amid the complexities of, to take but one example, diverse classrooms with diverse kids who have diverse learning needs. We have seen with our own eyes what happens when teachers lack the courage to face these demands, to overcome the weariness that comes with their work and the fear that always accompanies conscious growth and learning, to expand and deepen their professional practice: they shut down and continue to conduct business as usual, despite the fact that it is no longer working.

The Circle of Trust approach has proved to be effective in helping people deal with both burnout and fear in ways that can contribute to deeper engagement with the craft-learning to which all good staff development must lead. In this way, as well as through trust building, Courage work helps strengthen the root system of effective and long-lasting staff development that translates into direct benefits for teachers and students alike.²

COURAGE WORK IN THE CONTEXT OF STAFF DEVELOPMENT

What might Courage work look like in the context of staff development? As you study the books bundled with this guide in light of the perspectives just offered and draw on your own knowledge and imagination, you will find many answers to that question. To stimulate that process, we offer a few brief examples drawn from our own experience of working with teachers; more, much more, on each of them can be found in the bundled books. (The appendix that follows this section contains thumbnail sketches of these books. Please note that three of them—*The Courage to Teach*, *A Hidden Wholeness*, and *Teaching with Fire*—come with their own detailed guides for individual and group use.)

Example 1: Building Trust Through Storytelling

If you have embraced the scientific and commonsense evidence that trust is essential to growing a professional practice in a community of peers, perhaps you will share our dismay at this simple fact: many of us work side by side with others for five, ten, or twenty years without knowing much more about them—or feeling better known by them—than we did when we started working together.

² Evidence of these claims, as well as other data about the impact of the Circle of Trust approach, is available at the Web site of the Center for Courage & Renewal (<http://www.couragerenewal.org/resources/evaluation>). Click on Resources & Evaluations, then on Evaluations. A study by Poutiatine showed that “an astounding 100% of the participants in [the] study reported an increase in their understanding of and capacity for relational trust in their workplaces.” A study by Intrator and Scribner showed that “over half of the [113] teachers who enrolled in the [Courage to Teach] program expressed feeling burned out, frustrated, and overwhelmed. Many had lost touch with their vocations. Remarkably, since being in the program 3–5 years ago, 104 of the 113 educators are still active in teaching and administrative roles, 6 have retired after full careers, and only 3 have left education.”

Common sense tells us that a certain degree of interpersonal knowledge is essential to creating trust among people. We do not mean that we need to know each other's most intimate secrets, but in the absence of any meaningful knowledge of another's experience it becomes much easier to form false and destructive images of that person. It is a simple fact of life that the more we know about another's journey, the less possible it is to dislike or distrust that person. Some degree of knowledge of what has shaped another person can help us understand things that might otherwise annoy or anger or threaten us.

In *Courage to Teach*[®] and *Courage to Lead*[®] retreats, people learn the power of simple storytelling, and they take it back to the workplace in simple but meaningful ways. For example, with a group of six or seven teachers you can start every meeting with an invitation for each person to take no more than two minutes to respond to a simple autobiographical prompt.

At one meeting the prompt might be, for example, "Tell us about an older person who was especially supportive when you were young"; at another meeting it might be, "Tell us about the first dollar you ever earned"; and at another, "Tell us about the best vacation you ever took." As people learn the value of exploring life experiences such as these, you can offer prompts more closely related to work, such as "Tell us about the best teacher you ever had" or "Talk about a student who had an impact on who you are as a teacher." These prompts are not commands but invitations, and the leader needs to make it clear that people are free to pass if they wish.

To those who feel that this kind of exercise wastes ten or fifteen minutes that could better be spent on business, we have a simple, real-world answer: weaving and reweaving the fabric of mutual knowing and trust through simple storytelling pays off big time when it comes to getting the work done and done well. In normal times, this deepening of relationships translates into smoother, safer, and more open communication, especially around taking the risks that creativity requires. In times of crisis, this fabric of mutual knowing creates the kind of resilience that can see a working group through confrontations with difficult problems.

What is the take-away lesson for staff development? Begin every session with a storytelling exercise of this sort, being clear with people about your rationale *and* about the simple invitational rule—and watch the learning community you want to create grow deeper and stronger as time goes by.

Example 2: A Model of Courageous Inquiry

If staff development is a process that happens on-site, in the midst of work and in community, then teachers must learn how to conduct an honest but respectful inquiry into their own and one another's practice. As we have said, the privatization of teaching makes everything from trust building to creative problem solving difficult, if not impossible. One of the major drivers of privatization is the fear that teachers feel about opening their practice to the scrutiny of others.

This fear is rooted in experiences we have all had of sharing a problem with others and ending up feeling worse than we did before we spoke.

Why do we feel worse? The answer varies. Sometimes we feel put down by another's arrogant claim that such and such has never been a problem for him, implying that if we were more like him we would be just fine. Sometimes we feel stupid because a well-intended person tells us that the answer is right before our eyes in this book or that workshop. Sometimes we feel ignored because we put our problem out there only to watch the conversation rush ahead to the next topic as if we had never spoken. For many people, one such experience is enough to keep them from trusting collegial problem solving for a long time to come.

This is why Courage to Teach groups follow a basic ground rule, one that is firmly enforced by the facilitator. When someone puts forward a problem that he or she is struggling with, there must be “no fixing, no saving, no advising, no setting people straight.” When we announce that rule at the first retreat of a long-term series of retreats, someone invariably says, “Well, what in heaven's name *are* we going to do with each other for the next year or two? You've just taken away the only things we know how to do!”

Fortunately we have an answer to that question, which is asked only partly in jest. This answer is key to conducting a truthful but respectful communal inquiry into the challenges of good teaching: we are going to learn how to ask one another honest, open questions—questions that evoke each person's inner wisdom, helping them to grow their teaching practice from the inside out. When these questions are asked and explored in community, a collective wisdom emerges, giving everyone a pool of insight on which to draw—without feeling judged, found wanting, and as though others are trying to “fix” them with their answers.

Learning to ask honest, open questions is not as easy as it may sound. Most of us have been conditioned to ask questions that are speeches in disguise, or at least nudges toward wherever it is we want the other person to go. “Have you thought about seeing a therapist?” is *not* an honest, open question! “Have you ever had a problem like this before?” *is* such a question, as is, “What did you learn at that time that might be useful to you now?”

Questions like these allow the person being asked to keep learning from his or her own experience, which is what being a reflective practitioner is all about. And when these questions are asked and answered aloud in the presence of our peers, we learn from one another as the inner process of reflection becomes more outward and mutual.

Although we emphasize the importance of honest, open questions as an alternative to fixing and advising people, we are not suggesting that colleagues should never seek or receive direct guidance for problems. Just as there is a place for both the “sage on the stage” *and* the reflective practitioner, there is also a place for both collegial guidance *and* evocative questioning. The question is one of balance—and because tips, tricks, and techniques are so efficiently delivered whereas questioning and reflection take time, balance is often lacking in our fast-paced workplaces. Learning to ask questions that honor the inner resources of every teacher can change the dance in ways that build trust and deepen learning.

Example 3: Celebrating Our Successes and Exploring Our Failures

Sharing success and failure with peers is one of the hardest things for any of us to do: one feels like ego inflation and the other feels like ego deflation. Yet if we do not share our successes, we lose the reinforcement of collegial affirmation; and if we do not share our failures, we fail twice: once in whatever it was that we messed up in our teaching, and again in refusing to share it in ways that might help us learn and grow.

Think for a moment about the fact that hospitalization itself is one of the leading causes of death in the United States due to the high rate of medical mistakes. It is no accident that the best hospitals in the country are those that have created “penalty-free” zones for the sharing of such tragic mistakes so that measures can be taken at both the system and individual levels to make it less possible that the same mistake will be made again. What if schools could create similar zones where teachers could learn from their mistakes, penalty free?

A learning community is by definition a community in which it is safe to share our failures as well as our successes, because failure is the point at which we are most likely to learn. How might we open a safe space for failure as well as success? Here is a simple approach to that question drawn from *The Courage to Teach*—an approach that will, we hope, suggest one more way in which Courage work can enrich staff development.

The Critical Moments in Teaching and Learning exercise begins with the drawing of a horizontal arrow on a chalkboard to represent the movement of a course from beginning to end. Teachers are asked to brainstorm the critical moments they experience along that line as a course proceeds. A “critical moment” is one in which a learning opportunity for students opens up, or shuts down, depending in part on how the teacher handles it. “In part” is an important qualification, because one of the challenges of teaching is the fact that not every dimension of every critical moment is under the teacher’s control.

The moments that teachers name are many and varied. As they are called out, each moment is noted on the time line with a word or two at the point or points when it tends to happen. Soon the line is dotted with episodes familiar to every teacher, some tense and dangerous, some full of hope and promise.

As the brainstorming continues, a simple but vital thing happens, almost without people being aware of it: teachers start talking openly about events that have perplexed and defeated them, as well as about those they have managed with ease. That is, they do freely what we must do if we are to help each other grow as teachers: speak openly and honestly about struggles as well as successes. If people were asked flat-out to name their failures, they would not reach this level of candor so quickly, if ever. The open, nondirective nature of this exercise invites honesty because it allows us to identify both highs and lows in a voluntary, descriptive, and non-judgmental way.

Teachers are then invited, as *The Courage to Teach* describes in detail, to talk in small groups about what they have done, for better and for worse, in the moments that interest them

the most. This talk is to be guided by the no-fixing rule—just honest, open question asking is allowed. The result of this kind of group work ranges from trust building to the most creative and practical kinds of problem solving as people learn from within and from one another in unexpected and life-giving ways.

Example 4: Using “Third Things” to Explore the Heart’s Dynamics

Continuing education for professionals too often stays on the surface, focusing exclusively on data, theory, and technique and failing to go to the human heart of the matter. By “heart of the matter” we mean just that: professional education often ignores the complex dynamics of the human heart that drive our use of data, theory, and technique, leading to many a professional failure, sometimes of a catastrophic sort.

Recently we saw a powerful illustration of this kind of catastrophic failure. During his testimony before a committee of the United States Congress, Alan Greenspan, a leading economist and major actor in America’s economic life, was asked what had most surprised him about our economic meltdown. He replied that he was in “shocked disbelief” to learn that the people who ran unregulated lending institutions had acted not to “protect shareholder equity” but to feather their own nests. Apparently Mr. Greenspan’s lifelong education in economics failed to include even an introductory course on the dynamics of the human heart, a course that surely would have included a lesson on the power of greed.

As every good teacher knows, the workings of the human heart have a powerful impact on teaching. Suppose, for example, that one of the critical moments revealed in the time-line exercise was the moment when a class gets out of hand due to serious behavioral problems among some of the students.

It is important to know that there are “classroom management” techniques that can be helpful in getting things under control so that learning can proceed. It is equally important, however, to know that children are very perceptive about what is going on inside the person who is using those techniques. Use them from a heart that is roiling with anger and resentment and fear of failure, and they will not work. But use these techniques from a heart that is well grounded and forgiving—a heart that does not depend on these students or the outcome of this struggle for its sense of identity and worth—and they are more likely to get the job done, because students will pick up on the authenticity of the person using them.

How can adults teach and learn with one another about such subtle inner dynamics as identity, self-worth, and forgiveness? We cannot run headlong at these topics and expect to get anywhere. They are simply too tender and too shrouded in mystery to yield to that kind of approach. So, in Courage work we heed the words of Emily Dickinson, who advised us to “tell the truth but tell it slant.” We have learned to approach these sensitive topics by going in through the side door or the back door via the use of “third things.”

A third thing is a text of some sort—a poem, for example—that allows us to explore such subtle issues through equally subtle metaphors. We call it a “third thing” in our retreat groups because it is a voice other than that of the facilitator or one of the participants, a voice that can say things, and help us say things, that we could not say for ourselves.

Take, for example, the “Who am I?” question that is so often asked in “inner life” workshops, followed by an exercise in which you list ten brief answers to that question, then talk about your list in a small group. Contrast this headlong approach with a group exploration of a poem by May Sarton called “Now I Become Myself.”

As the poem is read and discussed by the group, under good facilitation, people can reflect inwardly on many dimensions of the “Who am I?” question—on the masks they have worn trying to look like other people, on the dissolving and shaking events that have made them who they are, on their mad running toward goals that will never be reached. They can then say things about the poem that are really about themselves without ever using their own names, telling the truth but telling it “slant.” Then, as the group space proves itself to be safe, people can start attaching their own names to what they say, and conversation about the subtle issues of teaching can become deeper, richer, and more transformative.

Included in the books bundled with this guide is a volume of poetry filled with “third things” that have been used by teachers to deepen their craft and to sustain them in their vocations. With each poem you will find a brief story written by the teacher who submitted that poem, a story that says how and why the poem has helped that teacher in the context of his or her work.

As you read *Teaching with Fire* you will not only find poems and stories to use in staff development, but you will also understand more deeply why the Circle of Trust approach as a whole can help add the dimension of depth that the best staff developers are reaching for as they seek to offer more and more meaningful forms of support for school leaders, teachers, and children.

Appendix: *What's in the Bundled Books*

THE COURAGE TO TEACH: EXPLORING THE INNER LANDSCAPE OF A TEACHER'S LIFE, PARKER J. PALMER

“This book is for teachers who have good days and bad—and whose bad days bring the suffering that comes only from something one loves. It is for teachers who refuse to harden their hearts, because they love learners, learning, and the teaching life.” —From the Introduction

For many years, Parker Palmer has worked on behalf of teachers and others who choose their vocation for reasons of the heart but may lose heart because of the troubled, sometimes toxic systems in which they work. Hundreds of thousands of readers have benefited from his approach in *The Courage to Teach*, which takes teachers on an inner journey toward reconnecting with themselves, their students, their colleagues, and their vocations, to reclaim their passion for one of the most challenging and important of human endeavors.

This book builds on a simple premise: good teaching cannot be reduced to technique but is rooted in the identity and integrity of the teacher. Good teaching takes myriad forms, but good teachers share one trait: they are authentically present in the classroom, in community with their students and their subject. They possess a capacity for connectedness and are able to weave a complex web of connections among themselves, their subjects, and their students, and to help their students weave a world for themselves. The connections made by good teachers are held not in their methods but in their hearts—where intellect, emotion, spirit, and will converge in the human self—and are supported by the community that emerges among us when we choose to live authentic lives.

The tenth anniversary edition of *The Courage to Teach* includes an audio CD featuring a forty-five-minute conversation among Parker Palmer and his colleagues Marcy Jackson and Estrus Tucker from the Center for Courage & Renewal. Together they reflect on what they have learned from working with thousands of teachers and school leaders in their Courage to Teach and Courage to Lead programs, as well as others who yearn for greater integrity in their personal professional lives.

***THE COURAGE TO TEACH GUIDE FOR REFLECTION
AND RENEWAL, 10TH ANNIVERSARY EDITION,
PARKER J. PALMER WITH MEGAN SCRIBNER***

This book is a superb resource for those who wish to extend their exploration of the ideas in *The Courage to Teach* as individuals or as part of a study group.

The *Courage to Teach Guide* has been thoroughly updated and expanded to help readers reflect on their teaching and renew their sense of vocation. It proposes practical ways to create safe space for honest reflection and probing conversation, and offers chapter-by-chapter questions and exercises to explore the many insights in *The Courage to Teach*.

Included with the book is a DVD that brings to life the ideas in *The Courage to Teach* through a seventy-minute interview with Parker J. Palmer, originally recorded as a resource for the Center for Courage & Renewal. In this interview—which has been divided into brief chapters and topics—Palmer reflects on a wide range of subjects, including the heart of the teacher, the crisis in education, diverse ways of knowing, relationships in teaching and learning, approaches to institutional transformation, and teachers as culture heroes.

Discussion questions related to the topics explored on the DVD have been integrated into the guide, giving individuals and study groups a chance to have a “virtual conversation” with the author as well as to engage as readers with the text.

***STORIES OF THE COURAGE TO TEACH: HONORING THE
TEACHER’S HEART, SAM M. INTRATOR, ED.***

After the Courage to Teach program had been up and running for several years and the book of the same title had enjoyed a wide readership, the Center for Courage & Renewal invited stories from K–12 educators who had lived into the ideas at the heart of this movement, whether inspired by our work or other sources, including their own visions of possibility and hope. From a very large number of heartfelt submissions, the stories in this book were selected.

“It’s the worst-kept secret in education: the passionate and talented teacher makes more of a difference than any school policy. Yet for all the ink spilled over school reform, little gets written about what makes a great teacher tick. *Stories of the Courage to Teach* . . . [by Sam Intrator] bucks this trend by looking into the hearts of twenty-five effective teachers, knitting together their first-person narratives with his own ideas about great teaching.” —*New York Times*

“A heartwarming collection of essays about the doubts, passions, insecurities, and life-changing moments of teachers.” —*American School Board Journal*

“Our history books are filled with examples of the efforts of committed education employees who helped to make this country what it is today. *Stories of the Courage to Teach* challenges today’s teachers to see themselves not only as school employees, dedicated to serving children, but as leaders in their schools and communities.”
—Bob Chase, president, National Education Association

“The teachers featured in this anthology have all, at various junctures, been on the verge of exhaustion, and the book is, in many ways, a sustained meditation on how they’ve sought to regain their emotional and spiritual strength.” —*Teacher Magazine*

“*Stories of the Courage to Teach* . . . honors teachers who struggle to rekindle their passion for teaching.” —*Christian Science Monitor*

A HIDDEN WHOLENESS: THE JOURNEY TOWARD AN UNDIVIDED LIFE, PARKER J. PALMER

In *A Hidden Wholeness*, Parker Palmer reveals the same compassionate intelligence and informed heart that shaped his best-selling books *Let Your Life Speak* and *The Courage to Teach*. Here he speaks to our yearning to live undivided lives—lives that are congruent with our inner truth—in a world filled with the forces of fragmentation.

Mapping an inner journey that we take in solitude and in the company of others, Palmer describes a form of community that fits the limits of our active lives. Defining a *circle of trust* as “a space between us that honors the soul,” he shows how people in settings ranging from friendship to organizational life can support one another on the journey toward living “divided no more.”

Inspired by Palmer’s writing and speaking—and challenged by the conditions of twenty-first-century life—people across the country, from many walks of life, have been coming together in circles of trust to reclaim their integrity and help foster wholeness in their workplaces and the world.

For more than a decade the principles and practices in this book have been proved on the ground—by parents and educators, clergy and politicians, community organizers and corporate executives, physicians and attorneys, and many others who seek to rejoin soul and role in their private and public lives.

A Hidden Wholeness weaves together four themes that its author has pursued for forty years: the shape of an integral life, the meaning of community, teaching and learning for

transformation, and nonviolent social change. The hundreds of thousands of people who know Parker Palmer's books will be glad to find the journey continued here.

This 2009 paperback edition includes two new and useful features. *Circles of Trust* is a DVD containing interviews with Parker J. Palmer and footage from retreats he facilitated for the Center for Courage & Renewal. *Bringing the Book to Life*, by Caryl Hurtig Casbon and Sally Z. Hare, is a reader's and leader's guide to exploring the themes in *A Hidden Wholeness*. The DVD illuminates and illustrates the principles and practices behind circles of trust. The guide includes questions that connect the DVD to the book, offering "a conversation with the author" as well as an engagement with the text. Together, these features give readers new ways to internalize the themes of *A Hidden Wholeness* and share with others this approach to sustaining identity and integrity in all the venues of our lives.

TEACHING WITH FIRE: POETRY THAT SUSTAINS THE COURAGE TO TEACH, SAM M. INTRATOR AND MEGAN SCRIBNER, EDS.

Those of us who care about the young and their education must find ways to remember what teaching and learning are really about. We must find ways to keep our hearts alive as we serve our students. Poetry has the power to keep us vital and focused on what really matters in life and in schooling. *Teaching with Fire* is a wonderful collection of eighty-eight poems from such well-loved poets as Walt Whitman, Langston Hughes, Billy Collins, Emily Dickinson, and Pablo Neruda. Each of these evocative poems is accompanied by a brief story from a teacher explaining the significance of the poem in his or her life's work. This beautiful book also includes an essay that describes how teachers can use poetry to grow both personally and professionally.

Teaching With Fire was written in partnership with the Center for Teacher Formation and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. Royalties from this book are used to fund scholarship opportunities for teachers to grow and learn.

"Teaching with Fire is a glorious collection of the poetry that has restored the faith of teachers in the highest, most transcendent values of their work with children. . . . Those who want us to believe that teaching is a technocratic and robotic skill devoid of art or joy or beauty need to read this powerful collection. So, for that matter, do we all." —Jonathan Kozol, author of *Amazing Grace* and *Savage Inequalities*

"When reasoned argument fails, poetry helps us make sense of life. A few well-chosen images, the spinning together of words creates a way of seeing where we came from and lights up possibilities for where we might be going. . . . Dip in, read, and ponder; share with others. It's inspiration in the very best sense." —Deborah Meier, co-principal of the Mission Hill School, Boston; and founder of a network of schools in East Harlem, New York

“In the Confucian tradition it is said that the mark of a golden era is that children are the most important members of the society and teaching is the most revered profession. Our journey to that ideal may be a long one, but it is books like this that will sustain us—for who are we all at our best save teachers, and who matters more to us than the children?”—Peter M. Senge, founding chair, Society for Organizational Learning; and author of *The Fifth Discipline*

ABOUT THE CENTER FOR COURAGE & RENEWAL

Located on Bainbridge Island, Washington, near Seattle, the Center for Courage & Renewal has prepared (as of 2009) more than 175 facilitators in thirty states and fifty cities as well as a few overseas; supported affiliate programs in Dallas/Ft. Worth, Texas; Boston, Massachusetts; and Washington state; and served more than 25,000 people in retreat settings since 1997. The Center’s Web site offers many resources, including contact information for our growing community of facilitators; an events calendar with retreats and program offerings; downloadable writings by Parker Palmer and others; our quarterly e-newsletter, podcasts, and streaming video; and other opportunities for virtual community and connection. We welcome your interest in our work and programs, and we invite you to learn more about our work and our community. Please visit <http://www.CourageRenewal.org>