



An Apple A Day

Sept. 9, 2019

I would venture to say that 98% of people would be able to complete the statement, “An apple a day keeps the doctor away.” It is a commonly shared expression that is accepted as fact by a lot of people. Apples have been proven to be one of the most nutritious foods available and have huge health benefits, according to multiple studies.

As I have gotten older and read more about nutrition, I now understand why my Grandma put an apple in my Uncle Sam’s lunch every day and why she would always say, “Eat an apple before bed and keep the doctor from earning his bread.” She hadn’t read all the studies, but she obviously understood the importance of eating apples and never went to town without buying a bag of big, delicious apples.

I was recently in a workout facility in a hotel and I noticed a big bowl of red apples, and it made me think of the apple expression and my grandma’s affinity for apples. I immediately asked myself the question, if an apple a day keeps the doctor away and we all desire to keep the doctor away, why don’t we all eat apples every day? I thought about this and framed this as **a gap between what we know and what we do**. I thought about other things that we know that are contrary to what we do. It is amazing how much we really know that we fail to put into action.

We know that if we don’t have a relationship with students, they will likely not give us their absolute best. We know that if we don’t plan our lessons in a way that addresses students multiple learning styles, then not all students will learn the material. We know if we continue to do things as we have done them in the past, we will not produce the results we desire. We know that if we don’t organize our day and plan our time, we will not be as productive as we could have been.

It is amazing when you start to think about the things we know and compare those to the things we do, there is such a disconnect. **The gap between what we know and what we do is likely the biggest gap of all.**

Our actions are mostly the result of our inability, or inattention, to understanding the important concept of discipline. Discipline is the bridge between our desires for a new reality and our actions today. Discipline is the ability to make yourself do those things you know you should do regardless of the circumstances, regardless of how you feel or what someone else believes. Discipline is deciding your course and heading down that course with a single purpose. **Discipline is not about a feeling.** As my coach used to tell me, “It doesn’t matter how you feel, you have to go when you are tired.”

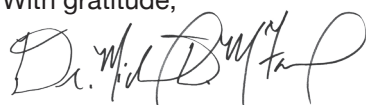
Engaging in disciplined behavior is not always easy and is actually one of the hardest things to do in life. But, as Jim Rohn states, “We must all suffer one of two things: the pain of discipline or the pain of regret or disappointment.”

Jim Collins, author of *Good to Great* and *Great by Choice*, wrote that the great become great by choosing to become fanatically disciplined. As I think about the work that each one of us has been called to do, I challenge you to master the inner will to do whatever it takes to create a great outcome, no matter how difficult it may be. I challenge you to commit every fiber of your being to doing what you say you are going to do so that we can produce the great outcome we desire.

Our aspiration is to prove that our students can achieve at high levels and that our students, our schools and our district can be as great as we choose for it to be. We simply have to take disciplined action on a daily basis as we prepare lessons and learning experiences for our students. We have to make sure that our comprehensive assessment systems are measuring what we treasure, and we must be prepared to respond rapidly when students are in need of intervention. Most of all, we must be prepared to do these things over and over again regardless of how we feel or what we think. We must eat our apple every day in order to keep the doctor away.

With something to think about, I am Dr. Mike McFarland. I am eating my apple today and everyday – so what about you?

With gratitude,



Mike McFarland