

Appendix X: Book- *Transformative Educator's Guide to Mindful Practice: Daily reflections and exercises for Peace of Mind, Excellence and Teaching from the Heart*----
By John Shindler

Control

If I ask you the question, “Who is the only person you can control?” what would you say? Of course you would say, “Me.” Because it is true. But sometimes our minds tell us that it will work to try to control others. So we do not have to judge ourselves here. It is natural. But let’s just accept that trying to control others is an illusion at best, and a cause of great unhappiness for us and dysfunction for our students. And let’s also accept a true and encouraging thought – we can have a wonderfully orderly class without having to control others. So the false choice that our mind (ie. Conditioning) might want to go to is between order from being controlling and chaos from giving up control. As we have discussed earlier control comes from fear. It will keep us in the teacher-centered 2/4 quadrants. And it will make us perpetually afraid of losing control.

So why do I try to control? First, it is a habit of the mind. So as this year goes on watch your tendency to want to believe the lie that getting controlling will get us something good. Second, it happens a lot more when we are not clear as to what our quality picture looks like. That is, when we cannot see what a functional orderly outcome looks like in a situation, we feel insecure, and that insecurity leads us to fear and survival based thinking like trying to control others. Third, we look to using an external locus of control and looking outside of us for the cause of the situation and why we feel the way we do.

Exercise:

So when we find ourselves being controlling let’s stop for a moment and do the following:

1. Forgive yourself for not being perfect and don’t waste time here judging yourself for something you told everyone you never do.
2. Bring your focus inside and feel the limitless power you have.
3. Ask yourself – to the best of your ability how would you describe what you want? What is your positive picture? What is a good outcome? Simple is fine here.
4. Ask yourself, what can you do to get your picture? Do you need to make a change, follow through with a consequence, re-teach something, or just change your energy and demeanor? What is the situation asking for from you?