

[00:00:02] Speaker A: Becca, why'd you become a teacher?

[00:00:04] Speaker B: I became a teacher because of those moments where you see a kid just get something, and it could be an academic skill that they're working on or a social skill or just realizing where they belong and why. I was a kid who needed teachers to feel like I belonged. And I dreamed of being a teacher that helped kids feel like they belong and that they could do things. And my favorite part of teaching is watching. Watching kids get it, like, and as I call it, the world of kindergarten or little kid land. You almost watch those light bulbs light up before your eyes, and it's a beautiful thing.

[00:00:46] Speaker C: This season, we are focused on the power of connection to nourish healthy regulation.

We discuss the importance of awe, that feeling of seeing a beautiful sunrise or when someone overcomes a trial, and the way awe can help us stay grounded and calm.

We also share ways to create a sense of belonging in our classroom communities.

This is sticky hope.

[00:01:19] Speaker A: I think most of us have a story that if we're asked, like, why did you become a teacher? It's because of kids or a content area that we want other people to love. And it's just this. It's that awe. Like, we like seeing kids just in awe of either the content knowledge or of learning something, of learning to read or of learning about mitosis, whatever it is, that is something that we really like. So I was this summer came across a research study about the power of awe and that it actually, we crave awe as people. And so awe, it's like when you're out in nature and you see like a beautiful sunset or when you see a beautiful painting, this sense of awe, it can be when you watch somebody overcome something really hard and you feel that sense of awe that plays this role in helping us really feel. Feel purposeful in life. It helps settle us a little bit. It helps keep focus on what's most important. And so when we're thinking about classrooms, in our classrooms by this time of the year, there's tricky behavior happening. Like, like we see it, it's beginning to be predictable. We know which students might not know what kind of tricky behavior, but they're starting to see some tricky behavior. And it can get really heavy when, at least for me, it can feel heavy. When I'm seeing tricky behavior over and.

[00:02:59] Speaker B: Over again, you lose that sense of awe. Right? And it's hard to find moments amidst the tricky behavior, whether it's, you know, shouting out during a read aloud every single time you're reading a book or, or it's chairs flying across the room and desks being dumped. And it's hard, you know, in that moment, you're not going to be, like, you know, filled with awe.

In the moments before or the moments after or several hours later, it can be so important to stop and notice something that that child is doing that fills you with awe. Whether it's their perseverance and resilience to step back into the classroom after having experienced those behaviors, or their determination to repair relationships, or, like, just the fact that they were able to regulate again after an episode like that. Those are really big deals. Each of those independently is a really big deal and is awe inspiring. And when we can take the time to notice the positive things that fill us with awe, it can shift our perspective about those really hard moments that don't fill us with awe.

[00:04:09] Speaker A: Yeah, because, like, that's not. You're exactly right. Like, I'm not going to feel inspired all the time. And there's some behavior that's. That's very difficult. It's just challenging to navigate. But if I want to navigate it with compassion, then I'm beginning to

believe that I need to take some time to feel awe. Not just out on a trail when I'm hiking, but also in the classroom with kids who are coming from all walks of life and have all different kinds of experiences. So, and I think that's an important part of this, is not just, you know, being in awe by one kid or a handful of kids, but like, can I be in awe? Can I be enamored by all of the students I'm coming into contact with? And so we have a couple questions, right. That will help kind of orient us to seeing these. So one of them, this is one of my very favorite ones. I use it with, actually people who are right, who want to write professionally. I often ask them this question, and it's this.

What surprised you lately, Becca? I think you've had article ideas based on that question. What surprised you lately? So what's something, you know, that surprised you when you're with kids?

[00:05:29] Speaker B: I have, because of this question, I'm, like, usually ready to answer that question when we're ready. We're about to talk. Because you've just kind of shifted my perspective. And something that surprises me and leads me to feel awe of in children's presence is when they choose to keep going. And it can feel like, especially with younger kids, but probably with older kids, too, it can feel like they give up super easily. And it's almost frustrating when they. It feels like Their kids are giving up on a task all the time and whining or asking for help. And instead of choosing to get stuck in the moments where it feels overwhelming, overwhelming because they're asking for help, the 10th time, I choose to look for a time where they do persevere and, and be in awe of that. And then I can build on that, right? Like, if they're able to persevere in getting their coat on fast because it's time for recess, then they can also persevere in getting their folder in their backpack, even though, like, they have a big folder and a little backpack. And so it's just really kind of taking the step back and noticing when they're choosing to. To persevere and step into the resilience that they're building.

It can be a really beautiful thing.

[00:06:48] Speaker A: It can be. Another question is, what has enamored you lately? And I really like that idea of, like, being enamored.

We, I just think, like, we just live in this world that's so hurry up or this is rolling. I use scroll, scroll, scroll, scroll so quickly that I think, like, it takes us. We have to be on, like, purposeful about saying, like, what's enamored me recently about things that are happening in my classroom.

[00:07:23] Speaker B: It has been really fun. So my youngest son at home, we're home for the summer, so I'm spending a lot more time with him. And one of his biggest passions is lions.

And when we were with, with you, we went to the zoo. And I'm almost enamored, I guess you could say I'm enamored with his passion for things he loves because we got to that lion exhibit at the zoo and his whole body, like, he was jumping and squealing and just he was in awe of the fact that he was in the presence of, as he would say, a real wife, Wyan. And, like, it made me teary eyed to know that he got to have that experience and, like, how special it was that we got to be there in his presence for it. And I think those moments can happen in. Those moments do happen in classrooms daily, right. Where kids are so excited about what they're learning that they are rushing over to you with a book and showing you the gross bug on the page. Or they find the spider in the corner and they're going to rescue the spider in the corner instead of killing the spider in the corner. And it's about taking those moments as moments to be enamored with their passion instead of annoyed by the potential disruption.

[00:08:42] Speaker A: Yeah, Becky, well, first of all, that line was amazing. It was, like, perfectly positioned, right, like the dis. Like, it was just really amazing. And I was so grateful that, you

know, Wesley was able to see him.

[00:08:56] Speaker B: Yeah.

[00:08:57] Speaker A: As you were talking, it is so easy to be like, we can be enamored or we can be annoyed.

One of our daughters, she. We adopted her. She came to live with us when she was six years old. So she was in kindergarten, and we got her at the end of the school year. And she was in one of her specials classes. And she loved it. I'd be like, it's what she came home every day talking about. She loved the teacher, she loved the class. She loved everything about this specials class. She wore a special, like, outfit on the day that she went to this special. It was, like, a really big deal. So she loved it. And when we got her midterm report, she got. It was at the time, like, you got, like, outstanding, satisfactory, unsatisfactory. And she got unsatisfactory. She got a U in this class. And I was like, so she's a kindergartner, and it's a very thing, right? And so I say to her, hey, what do you think you got in this class? And she's like, whatever is the best is what I got. I am so good at this class. She's like, I am just awesome. I'm sure it's, you know. So anyway, we go. It was like, meet the teacher, whatever. And I met her and Andy, my husband, takes the other kids out. And I just say, I don't understand why she got an unsatisfactory. Because she loves this. She loves you. She loves the content. And the teacher was like, she won't stay sitting down.

Of course not. She's in kindergarten, and she's really, really excited. And in that conversation, which I was not at my finest, they'd been in our house, you know, like, we'd had them for about four weeks. I don't even know. They'd been there a month. And I just was really shocked that she would get it this unsatisfactory. And when you were just describing that, Becca, it's right. It's this. We had. She had the opportunity to be enamored that this little girl who had been in foster care for a number of years and was transitioning, was able to be excited and passionate and participate in a class. We could be enamored by that resilience, or we can be annoyed because she wasn't sitting down.

[00:11:20] Speaker B: I have so many thoughts.

[00:11:22] Speaker A: Yeah.

And I think there's a fine line between the two.

[00:11:27] Speaker B: There is that story. First of all, I've never heard that story and I have so many thoughts. But what I'll say is I think it points out an important fact that we need to choose to be the teachers that are enamored. Because it's fascinating that your daughter didn't feel that, like she didn't come home telling you that she was told to sit down repeatedly. She didn't feel like she was different than the other kids in that class. And. And that's beautiful. But maybe it was only because it was only four weeks and if it had been all year, that would be a different story. But that could have easily squashed her. And it was a chance to connect.

[00:12:12] Speaker A: Right.

[00:12:12] Speaker B: It was a chance to show that she's accepted and welcomed and that she belonged. And instead the teacher made it clear that she didn't and she didn't accept her as she was. And how sad and, and yay for resilience in your daughter.

[00:12:28] Speaker A: Yeah. And I mean, kids are all wired differently. So Hannah didn't have a lot of like, social skills to be able to recognize, like, I shouldn't do that. You know, she just didn't

have that at the time. But it is about belonging. And so, you know, yes, being enamored, being in awe is good, like, for us, like, that's a good practice. But it's also really great when we're creating these communities of belonging. So in the book we have this section about belonging and for lack of a better word, we've been calling it like this belonging bubble to think about how to really help kids feel like they. They belong and everybody else does too.

[00:13:10] Speaker B: This concept of the belonging bubble is, is our way of portraying this really important component, or I guess we'll go with that component of being a community.

And belonging really comes down to three things in a community, in a classroom community, like, to accept and what it really means to accept someone as they are. Right. As the kid who's bouncing around and having a hard time sitting down. But you can't just accept someone and then kind of let them be. You want to celebrate who they are and genuinely celebrate in those moments where they're coming over to you with the gross looking bug in the book or wanting to save the spider and the whole class walks outside to save the spider. Celebrate what is important to them, especially for those kids that maybe are coming from a trickier background. Whether you know it or not, sometimes that's what's what you're looking at. The reality is so many of our kids have come from lives filled with disruptions, and we get the choice to accept and celebrate them for who they are.

[00:14:14] Speaker A: And then that other side of that belonging bubble, so it can wrap around, would be including and making sure the kids are included. I think a lot of times in our classrooms, we'll accept the kids that are on our classroom list. We'll include them. Yeah, they're in the room. But the celebrating one is sometimes where I think it can become difficult because. Well, like for you, if a kid has new Velcro shoes, you really don't want to celebrate that.

No, I don't.

[00:14:45] Speaker C: Yeah.

[00:14:46] Speaker B: And I have to make the choice right to. That's like my least favorite sound in the world is like Velcro. And when you teach kindergarten, first of all, you hope that everyone has Velcro shoes, but you also hope that they don't love, like, opening and closing their Velcro. At least if you're me, you hope that so. But I can choose to share my annoyance or I can celebrate like they are just so excited. They are so excited about so many things. But like a new pair of shoes, I can be excited in that with them and that can. Can ease my annoyance with the sound. And then I can gently guide them to how many times they're going to open and close that Velcro during the day.

[00:15:28] Speaker A: It's true. It just comes down to a mindset. And I think early in the year, if we can develop this mindset to be in awe, to celebrate the kids for who they are in front of us, then that's going to angle us for how we're going to move, how we're going to navigate some challenging behavior later on. These questions, what surprises you? What enamors you? We could easily take a really kind of negative tone to it. And I just would encourage, like to watch out for that. Like, what surprised you if it's like this kind of negative, snarky response? That's not the mindset we're talking about. So one thing that we'd like to invite people to do would be to create an awe journal.

[00:16:12] Speaker B: Yeah. I think as teachers, it's important to stop and notice the good and notice the moments during your day that do bring you awe, because it can be easy, like you were just saying, to focus on all of the hard and lose those moments. And so to take a few moments at the end of the day or every couple of days and take note and. And physically write down moments that brought you awe and what that does for your brain is gives you a grounding

point, right? It can give you a point of reflection and just to help you remember these things that are happening. And it gives you this whole collection of beautiful moments for you to return to when you're not feeling that awe. And you need to remember that awe happens here.

[00:17:06] Speaker C: Takeaway Number one Consider the reason you became a teacher.

What enamors you about your job?

Recent research shows the importance of all in being grounded and calm.

Takeaway Number two Begin an all job journal.

Be on the lookout for moments that enamor you.

In the Sticky Hope notes for episodes 28 to 33, there is a principle for the front of your journal.

It includes three questions to help you collect moments of awe.

If you aren't on the Sticky Hope Notes list, you can sign up at www.stickyhope.com.

takeaway number three we can be intentional about creating a classroom where everyone feels they belong.

We included a principle of the Belonging bubble in the Sticky Hope notes for episodes 28 to 33.

As we discuss in our new book, *Belonging Happens When People feel accepted, included, and celebrated*.

Take time to reflect on the way you accept, include and celebrate the students in your classroom.

If you love this podcast, please take a moment to follow us and leave a rating and review.

We also hope you'll tell a friend.

Tricky behaviors happen in all classrooms. We can navigate them with compassion.