



RiseZine

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Welcome to **RiseZine** my electronic magazine (ezine) that can help you solve problems in your business and your life. It is my desire to bring you inspiration from my life experiences and those I gained during the twenty (20) years I spent as a Judge of the Denver County Court participating in the transformation of lives. I'm convinced that those experiences will heighten your knowledge, sensitivity and outlook on the issues you face in your business and your life. I am honored to share your precious time with you.

“IT’S YOUR STORY”

In James Baldwin’s epic 1962 book, **The Fire Next Time**, the author told his nephew “this is the crime I accuse my country of and for which neither I nor time nor history will ever forgive them, that they are destroying hundreds of thousands of lives and do not know it and do not want to know it. You were not expected to aspire to excellence; you were expected to make peace with mediocrity.”

In my last RiseZine, I praised my first grade teacher, **Mrs. Theada W. Green** for inspiring me to excellence and shunning mediocrity. I spoke to her daughter, Dr. Deborah Green, after sending her a copy of the RiseZine. She said her mother was delighted to read it and that she was honored by my story. Dr. Green also said her mother instilled that same quest for excellence in her. Just this week I found my report card from first grade and realized that I had misspelled her first name. I am correcting that today. I also asked if any subscribers would share their stories of a teacher who impacted their lives. I thank those of you who responded and I am pleased that you gave me permission to share your stories:

Michael Covert, President, Covert Aire, my HVAC/R provider, shared the following: “There have been many teachers that have developed my "me" as a person in my life, however, when it comes to my business, I remember the words of **Mr. Ricky Sullivan**. In the second half of my high school tenure, I had decided to add to my "schooling" and learn a skill, a trade, something to fall back on. Since my father was the Principal of the very same Vocational Center, it was somewhat of a natural fit. Looking over the various curricula, the only thing that really intrigued me was Heating and Air Conditioning, Refrigeration. I figured "hey.... If worse comes to worse, people are ALWAYS going to have to have heating and refrigeration forever. So, it was. I loved this stuff. I aced it. As a matter of fact, I had a GPA of 4.5 mid way through my senior semester. Mr Sullivan sat me down.... and gave me some advice that has eventually propelled me to owning a successful and profitable HVACR firm. Mr Sullivan's advice was, "do not settle for just working in this industry, you have the ability to become a difference in this industry". How prophetic his words were..... 2 degrees and 22 years after that, I opened Covert Aire, one of SC and GA's most referred AND preferred HVAC/R companies. Now, 7 years later I still celebrate his advice. Thank you Mr Sullivan.... You have made a difference in my life and, because of that a difference has been made in the lives of thousands of customers.”

Joe Walter shared the following: “Your comments certainly sparked some of my memories. My 1st grade teacher's name was **Miss Care**. If you look up the word "care" in the dictionary her picture would definitely be there. She took a special interest in every student in the class. What I remember most is how she taught us about respect. She would emphasize respect in the class room for other students. Why you raise your hand and not just blurt out an answer to a question but wait to be called on. The meaning of Respect has stayed with me from that day forward. Respect your parents, Respect your elders, Respect your teachers (to this day I have a problem calling a former teacher by their first name) and Respect your fellow man. Thank you Miss Care.

Mr. Young was my physical education teacher in elementary school. His message was always Team Work and Never Give Up. In 5th & 6th grade basketball it was always "pass the ball". Three passes before anyone took a shot. I was fortunate to make an all star basketball team in 6th grade. We played a prelim game before a County League game of adult all stars from the greater Philly area.

After our game we sat with the adult players on the bench. There was one player on the visiting team who was so tall he had to duck entering the gym. He was by far the tallest player on both teams. He played center for their team and took a shot every time he touched the ball. He made most of them. After the game I asked Mr. Young why the big guy never passed the ball. He said Joey there will always be exceptions and in some cases exceptional players. I asked Mr Young who this player was. He said he was a high school player for Overbrook High School. He played in the adult league because he was just that good. He went on to score 100 points in a professional game in Hershey, Pa. You guessed it, his first name was Wilt. Twenty five years later Mr. Young and I played in an adult volleyball league and after the games we would go out for an adult beverage or two at a local tavern. One night I remember asking him if he remembered the night we saw Wilt play in our little gym. He remembered it well. He said Wilt scored over 50 points of the teams 75 and beat the local team by 30 points. He also asked me how I thought the other players on his team felt after the game. It's a good thing he learned how to "pass the ball" later in his career or he may not have had the storied career he had. Thanks Mr. Young for teaching me to pass the ball and play as a team.

Rawn Grant shared his story: “**Ms. McCravey** was my third grade teacher at Boynton Elementary School in Detroit Michigan. She taught us about hygiene and always being ready to make a first impression. She asked all the boys in our class to ask our mom’s to teach us how to wash our own clothes, iron them, sew them, and put patches on them. She had two paddles. Mr. Jack (5 bolo paddles held together with electrical tape with holes drilled in them) and Mrs. Jack (3 bolo paddles). You entered her class one at a time for hygiene check. Your hair had to be combed; she smelled your breath, your under arms, and checked to see if your clothes were ironed. One infraction was 5 swats with Mrs. Jack, for more than one it’s that many times 5 with Mr. Jack. She would have you bend over, pull your pants tight and whack away, Then she would give you tooth paste (tooth brush was part of our supplies list that we got the first day of class) deodorant, comb or brush. My mom enjoyed teaching me to wash, iron and sew. I have been married 29 years and I still wash, iron my clothes the night before (can’t stand double creases), and sew my own clothes. I asked my wife Joyce a couple of weeks ago what it was that she saw in me 35 years ago. I did not have a car, we were poor, I thought I was at best average looking, average athlete (did not make the high school basketball or

football team) and I knew all the guys that wanted to date her. Her answer was simply you were always clean and neat: One time to make a first impression; every time, as if it was your first impression. Thank you Ms. McCravey!”

Marilyn Bell Starke shared the following: “I wanted to tell you about my Mrs. Green; he was my 4th grade teacher **Jack Thompson**. I am now 48 and still think of him so often. I came from a troubled home my father was an alcoholic and it made things very difficult. Mr. Thompson knew this and made special effort to encourage my brother and me and even had us to his home to do special things with him and his wife. I think they just wanted to give us a weekend of “normal home life” that was safe and secure now and then. What I remember most was a hard but important lesson. I wanted to do everything perfect for Mr. Thompson. I was afraid I did not know a couple multiplication tables before a big test so I wrote a couple on my hand and essentially cheated on the test. Mr. Thompson caught me and took me to his office after the test and asked to see my hand. I was so ashamed and explained I wanted to do well to please him. He explained that cheating was never right, that I hurt myself by not properly studying and in the end I let him down more than if I had missed the two equations I had written on my hand. It made such an impression on me that I never cheated on any test or anything else ever in my life. He was such an inspiring and dedicated teacher. Mr. Thompson saw something in me that I didn’t see in myself and that was potential. . Mr. Thompson made me feel like I was special and sparked a fire of hope in me which I held onto my entire life to always do my best, be honest and kind, give people more than they expect and be myself. He put my life on the right path and impacted my life in many ways, he was my hero. Thanks for sharing about your hero and reading about mine.

Finally, Jim Kenney was reminded of **Mr. Henry Reid** at Armstrong High School in Richmond, VA who taught him math and driver education and how he influenced him to excel in his studies to compete in school and later in life. My high school classmate, Michigan Hill remembered how his love of geography and travel was inspired by **Mrs. Emrich** at Mitchell Elementary School where she had him learn the capital cities of the (then) forty-eight states and how, as he became so proficient, she made him learn them in the order in which they joined the Union. My youngest son, Rob, said he had too many good teachers to name but he had a

special gratitude for **Mrs. Walston**, at Oakland Elementary School for helping him learn those times tables.

This is the first RiseZine where selected subscribers were given the opportunity to tell their story. I hope you have enjoyed and been inspired by their stories of teachers who impacted their lives. The late James Baldwin would be pleased to know that many were inspired to achieve excellence and find their passion because of a teacher who demanded the most and accepted nothing less than the best from us and that has made all the difference in our lives.

IT'S YOUR STORY

Postscript: I have lost 4 more pounds since the last RiseZine. To those who are joining me, continued success. I look forward to hearing from you with your success stories.

Can't your organization use a healthy infusion of inspiration, motivation or training in Leadership, Decision-making, Communication, Ethics or Team-building? I can provide a keynote, workshop, seminar or individual coaching tailored to meet your needs and help you and your team ***RISE***.

“Do just once what others say you can't do, and you will never pay attention to their limitations again.” James R. Cook.

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