



## 11 Reasons Why You Should Never, Ever Lose Your Cool

By Michael Linsin

Teachers tend to lose their cool when they feel they have no other recourse.

Their buttons get pushed, frustration builds, and they boil over.

They raise their voice. They fume and lecture. They glare and scold and stab the air with their finger.

For some, it's a hair-trigger habit that can happen with the least provocation. For others it takes some doing.

But in every situation, and with every student, it's a mistake.

It's *always* a mistake.

Here's why:

### **1. It sabotages rapport.**

When you lose your cool you risk undoing weeks, or even months, of fruitful rapport-building with your students. In an instant you can go from likable and influential to someone your students prefer keep at arm's length.

### **2. It weakens your classroom management plan.**

A positive relationship with students gives meaning to your classroom management plan. It supplies the leverage to dissuade misbehavior. If time-out doesn't matter to your students – and it won't if they dislike you and (by extension) your classroom – then neither will it be effective.

### **3. It undermines accountability.**

When you react emotionally to misbehavior you undermine true accountability – because it causes students to blame you, direct their simmering anger at you, and justify for their misbehavior. In other words, it replaces healthy reflection with excuses.

### **4. It worsens behavior.**

Yelling, scolding and the like can result in immediate improvement. But alas, it's only temporary. In the long run, behavior will always worsen – especially the sneaky, behind-your-back variety – due to the friction and animosity between you.

### **5. It leads to parent complaints.**

Yelling at students is among the most common complaints from parents – and it's difficult to defend. The best you can offer is an apology and a promise to not let it happen again. Still, it will cement your reputation as a “mean” teacher.

### **6. It ruins trust.**

Trust is built over time. It's built through consistency. It's built by doing what you say you will. When you forgo your classroom management plan

in favor of a fiery lecture or a finger-wagging dressing down, you're going back on your word.

### **7. It announces your lack of effectiveness.**

Teachers grow frustrated and lose their cool when they don't know another way. When you bark at your students you're announcing to them, your principal, other teachers, and everyone else within earshot that you don't have effective classroom management skills.

### **8. It fills your classroom with tension.**

Teachers who let misbehavior get under their skin create an environment that teems with unhealthy energy. You can feel it the moment you enter the room. The students are distracted and unhappy. They're excitable and restless. And learning is far from mind.

### **9. It teaches students to do the same.**

Every time you lose your cool you provide a model – and your permission – for your students to do the same. It trains them to lose their composure when things don't go their way. It teaches them to give in, buckle under, and fall apart when faced with challenges.

### **10. It destroys your fulfillment.**

Letting anger get the best of you robs you of the deeper joys of being a teacher. It creates a you-against-them form of classroom management that removes the love, the laughter, and the eyeball-to-eyeball connections that make teaching more than just a profession.

## **11. It burdens you with stress.**

Yelling and scolding is incredibly stressful – and not just in the moment. At home at the dinner table, getting out of bed in the morning, driving to work . . . it stays with you. It whispers in your ear that you've become the teacher you never wanted to be.

### **A Better Way**

The antidote to losing your cool is a comprehensive understanding of effective classroom management principles and how to apply them.

It's a redirection from what was once frustration and anger in reaction to misbehavior . . . to a calm, impartial response – one that both safeguards your influence and fairly and ethically holds your students accountable.

It's allowing your classroom management plan to do the heavy lifting for you, so you can be the inspirational teacher your students will always remember.

The one you always wanted to be.