



## How To Recover From A No Good, Unruly, Disorderly Teaching Day

By Michael Linsin

So things went south toward the end of the day.

Your students were antsy and talkative. There were disruptions. The noise level got out of hand.

Perhaps you got behind and let things go a bit. You raised your voice a few times.

Whatever the case, it wasn't a good day. Now you're wrung out and exhausted and wondering how to get the train back on the track.

The good news is that as long as it was a minor setback, and not [a total loss of control](#), it isn't difficult to do. It isn't difficult to tighten things up, grease down the rails, and start anew.

A few simple steps first thing in the morning is all it takes.

Here's how:

**1. Begin *outside your door*.**

If you don't already meet your students outside your classroom door, it's good practice to do so. This step alone will put them in a more focused, more productive frame of mind before entering.

When recovering from a bad day, lining up outside will also send the message that the expectation bar has been picked up off the floor and placed back on the top rung where it belongs.

## **2. Preview the day.**

Rehashing yesterday's woes is counterproductive. It merely drags the bad energy with you into the morning. Instead, focus on the future by [previewing](#) the cool or interesting or exciting things you have planned for them.

Give them a compelling reason to *want* to listen, learn, and follow rules. Reignite their love for school first, and you'll have all the leverage you need to secure a great day.

## **3. Restate the rules.**

While maintaining the same upbeat approach, quickly restate [your classroom rules](#). *"As an important member of this classroom you have a responsibility to listen and follow directions, raise your hand before speaking . . ."*

Remember, your classroom management plan is designed to protect their right to learn and enjoy school. It preserves an environment of kindness and respect. It's a good thing! And it must be communicated as such.

## **4. Review the first routine.**

Just before waving your students into the classroom, review the initial morning routine. You don't have to model it as you did the first week of school, but you do need to touch on every key expectation from start to finish.

As you're speaking, visualize yourself as a student completing each step along the way until you're seated, quiet, and looking at the teacher. In this way, your students will picture themselves doing it right along with you.

### **5. Watch like a hawk.**

The first routine of the day is critical in restoring your classroom to its well-behaved state. A smooth and efficient performance will put to rest any concerns from the day before.

Therefore, you mustn't busy yourself with paperwork, interacting with individual students, or mentally rehearsing your opening lesson. Put all of your focus into watching your class carry out the routine.

### **6. Repeat if necessary.**

If the opening routine is anything less than a 10 out of 10, there is no reason to sigh or complain or let it affect you emotionally in any way. Just smile and send them right back outside to [do it again](#).

How they feel about it isn't your concern. You're holding them to a standard required for a peaceful, happy, and successful classroom, and that's just the way it's going to be.

### **Hope Is Not A Strategy**

The biggest mistake teachers make after a bad day is to turn grim and standoffish, to use a show of disappointment and the threat of turning 'mean' as a hedge against a repeat performance.

And although this may help tamp down excitability and misbehavior in the immediate term, it does nothing to correct the problem. It does nothing to ensure that it won't happen again.

Furthermore, such power plays damage rapport, sap motivation, and cause students to care a lot less about being in your classroom.

The steps above, however, address *the cause of the problems* from the day before.

They refresh and restore your classroom back to well-being. They remind you of the utter importance of [being consistent](#), of doing exactly what you say you will.

They also give you a chance to clear the boards and start anew, to turn the setback into a positive rather than a negative, and to *know* the train is back on the track and running on all cylinders.

Instead of just hoping it is.