

∞ Foreword ∞

If you are a parent, you may already be aware there is a lot more to the job of teaching than what your child or children are experiencing in school. You may be interested to know that I have been working to improve schools for fifty years. I have had some success but I am still learning.

I started college during WWII, studied chemical engineering and worked for a year as an engineer until I realized that I didn't like what I was doing. I wanted to work with people. I began by studying psychology and then was persuaded by one of my psychology professors to go to medical school and become a psychiatrist.

The medical school I went to, Western Reserve University in Cleveland, Ohio, had already embarked on a different kind of teaching program. It was all about learning. There was no pressure, few tests and a great deal of personal attention from the faculty. We were encouraged both to ask questions and feel free to question what we were taught.

I was very impressed by that program. When I became a psychiatrist and started to work in a juvenile prison with girls ages fifteen to twenty, I was amazed at how similar that program was to what I had experienced in medical school, and I had a chance to add some of what I had learned to it. The girls loved it because there was no punishment, no failure and a girl could even stay in the cottage if she didn't want to go to school.

Contrary to what I'd been taught about delinquency before I went there, the girls told me over and over that it was not their home life that led them into trouble, it was what happened in school. With a lot of attention and no chance to fail, they attended our classes and did very well.

Based on that start, I have written five books on education and have finally developed the Glasser Quality School that has attracted almost thirty very effective public and public

charter schools. But then as often happens to me, Resa Steindel Brown, whom I did not know, asked me to read her book. I was skeptical. Reading books from strangers has not always been a happy experience for me.

As soon as I read the first thirty pages, I was not only surprised, I was slightly overwhelmed. I could not put it down. I started in the morning and finished it before a late dinner. Here was a book that went considerably beyond what I'd ever learned especially in the area of home schooling. To make sure, I asked my wife Carleen, who works with me, to read it, and she had the same amazing experience. It is a very personal odyssey by a woman who describes her life as a student, wife, mother, teacher and is still very active in all these roles.

In this odyssey you will meet Resa, her husband Dennis, her daughter Erin and her sons, Stephen and Matthew. This book is a beautiful memoir of a great family. Either as an expert or as a parent struggling with a child in school, you cannot read it without learning a great deal. They say it takes a village to raise a child, but here is a whole family working separately and together who raised three remarkable children. Every one of them contributed to this book.

After we finished it, we called Resa and agreed to not only write an endorsement but the foreword as well. This is a true memoir about the struggles and successes of a very happy family. We are proud to have become involved with them.

I have only one caution to the reader. If you are looking for an author who claims to have overcome unbelievable misery to get where he or she is, this is not the book for you. But I will also make a prediction: you will hear more about this happy family. Their journey has just begun.

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