

Preface

This volume assembles experiences from the areas of early childhood education, gifted education, special education, inclusive education, and adult education. These happen in a variety of locales, such as summer camps, school settings, family settings and projects.

The first chapter focuses on the work situation of a special education teacher, who upon arriving in an urban school for students with behavioral difficulties, began keeping a journal which spanned his first three months at work. Using qualitative content analysis, his field notes were organized by subject areas and examined with reference to the patterns that emerged. The results provide insights into a challenging educational reality. I would like to thank Nicola Kluge, Woodlands, Texas, for her support during the analysis of the data which is documented in this chapter. Nicola and I presented and discussed the results of our analysis at the 2013 annual conference of the »Council for Children with Behavioral Disorders (CCBD)«, in Chicago.

The second chapter recounts the journey of a special education teacher traveling by train with his class to the North Sea island of Sylt, in Germany, where the group intends to spend a week in a school camp. During the journey, various incidents and upsets take place that escalate to the uncoupling of a train car. This real episode was used productively for several years in special education university courses, such as inclusive education, for the purpose of storytelling as a pedagogical tool in higher education.

Chapter three deals with the »Movable Layout Technique (MLT)«, an instructional adaptation here used to teach art in challenging classrooms. With MLT students with social, emotional, and behavioral difficulties unexpectedly find themselves in a complex process of designing, experimenting and composing. They are easily and successfully guided into the artistic terrain and encouraged to independently lay out pictures and creative compositions in a motivational and pleasurable way. With MLT students advance gradually to complex picture composition and spatial organization, opening up pathways to freer forms of artistic work.

The fourth chapter explores the »Training Room Program (TRP)«, a time-out model that is based on the American »Responsible Thinking Process (RTP)«. Since 2003 this model has become established in German schools in response to students' increasingly challenging learning and social behavior. School administrators and academics alike recommend the implementation of the TRP as part of their efforts to conform to one of the goals put forth in the UN convention of ensuring the success of inclusive schooling for students with behavioral difficulties. But in executing this model, formal inclusion and temporary exclusion within the school become interconnected. The results yielded by this program evaluation indicate that the program impedes the development of a participative and empowering learning culture, even though it is precisely this factor which is indispensable for the successful inclusion of learners with emotional and social needs.

The focus of chapter five is education within families. The father in this case study gave each of his two sons a voucher for a one-week trip that the boys would each plan, then take separately with the father during the upcoming summer vacation. The father collected his initial thought processes and the plans in journal form. Together they reread journals from earlier trips and reflected on what happened in their course. Here the two journeys planned by the children are examined and discussed using qualitative textual analysis with the findings are linked to current theoretical knowledge.

Anyone who has accumulated wide ranging experiences in teaching faces a creative choice in putting that legacy to paper. I myself, in this

case, chose to use a series of photos with text to illustrate formative and inspirational moments from my several decades as a dedicated teacher, and father. My account (chapter 6) begins with university studies in special and gifted education, followed by years of teaching school while living a fulfilling family life with my wife and two boys. These experiences culminate with my pedagogical research activities in the field of higher education coupled, in part, with retrospective reflections during these later years. The chapter closes with selected material from an intergenerational learning project that served to put me in touch once more with my own roots.

Most notably, I would like to thank Dirk Siepmann and his team from University of Osnabrück, Germany, for translating this very particular compilation of texts which I selected for this volume.

This book is dedicated to my wife Karin Anna Jung-Bröcher, in gratitude for her loving companionship and support through all these years. She herself is a long-time special education teacher in an inclusive elementary school and, at the same time, always a devoted mother to our sons. Finally I would like to express my special thanks to my sons, in gratitude for their faithful companionship and all the shared learning that we could experience together. Karin and the boys also made substantial contributions to the chapters 5 and 6. I thank them all. J.B.

