

Excerpts from...

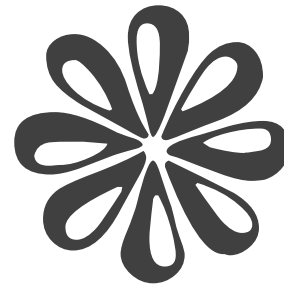
Daily Intentions for the Classroom Teacher

By Sarah Parker Wolf

This sampler includes:
Four weeks of reflections and
intentions to get your focused
on what matters.

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Dear Teacher Friends,

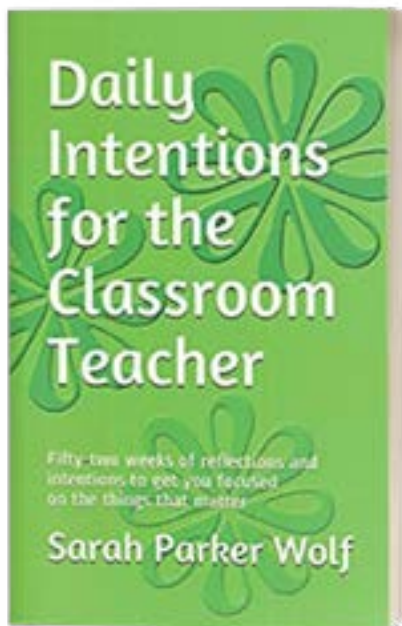
I recently published a book called ***Daily Reflections for the Classroom Teacher: Fifty-two weeks of reflections and intentions to get you focused on the things that matter.*** It is filled with stories, reflections, and thoughts grounded in mindfulness and what it means to be a classroom teacher.

I based the book on my own fourteen years in the classroom as well as in all the lessons I have learned (and am still learning) from so many wonderful teachers about self-care, mindful being, communication, and finding joy.

This sampler of four weeks of reflections and intentions is my gift to you. I hope they help you find focus and light on the (very often) wild journey of being a classroom teacher.

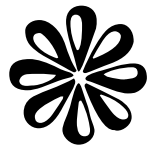
Peace and love to you!

Sarah



If you are interested in the full paperback or ebook edition, please visit sarahparkerwolf.com or you can find it on Amazon.

POSITIVITY





SERENITY SUNDAY

My youngest daughter struggles with self-regulation. She often reacts to the smallest problem with the biggest outburst. A broken pencil lead, the wrong worksheet, or (heaven help us!) a multi-step word problem can send her screaming, throwing herself on the ground and declaring that this is the worst day of her life. It is no joke to her. She honestly thinks it is.

Now, her reactions are extreme, but the lesson remains. Assess the size of the problem then, size your response accordingly. So many times, simply asking for help or addressing the issue takes that mountain down to a molehill. For those small to medium problems (and even some of the big ones), a combination of being solution-oriented with finding the lesson in what happened can turn us into more positive (and happier) people.

TODAY'S INTENTION:

*I rephrase any negative self-talk
to reflect a positive outlook.*



MEDITATIVE MONDAY

I'll fess up. I've walked into a meeting or a conference with my mind already made up that it would suck. That mindset managed to accomplish two things: I was miserable the whole damn time and I was not listening (I was judging instead). My question is: How do we know the outcome before we have even had the experience? Keep a positive or at least neutral outlook as you look ahead, you may be pleasantly surprised when it all turns out well in the end!

TODAY'S INTENTION:

*When I think ahead, I can see
the positive potential.*



TRUTHFUL TUESDAY

We have read all the memes— famous inventors and scientists and entrepreneurs who failed repeatedly until that one day when they didn't. And that successful day arrived because every time they failed, they learned. We also know that winning is great and winning is fun but winning often does not involve learning and growth. We need to help our students see the pleasure and importance of both, taking the time to unpack the lessons learned when failure comes. Don't miss those amazing teachable moments that can truly make a difference in "real" life.

TODAY'S INTENTION:

*I actively model the idea of
winning or learning.*



WELL-BEING WEDNESDAY

There is a student in your class with a paper in front of her. It is the same paper everyone else has but there is a difference. This student just looked you in the face, crumpled that paper and whipped it across the room. What do you do? Do you react? Or do you mindfully respond? Reacting is getting angry, demanding the kid go pick up the paper or go to the office. Mindfully responding involves noticing that anger that is rising in you and taking a moment to breathe and think before addressing the student. It may entail asking the student to speak with you privately or if the student is a danger, calmly calling for assistance and talking about that student's frustrations later. Make a conscious decision to respond today and see what a huge difference it makes for both you and your students.

TODAY'S INTENTION:

I consciously and deliberately respond.



THANKFUL THURSDAY

I have an old collector plate hanging in my kitchen that belonged to my grandma. It was one of the treasures I claimed when she entered a nursing home and her house was sold. On it is a girl sitting in a field of flowers. The message is "Count your blessings, not your troubles." I think it is a reminder we all need from time to time. Remember, even taking a breath is a wonderful blessing.

TODAY'S INTENTION:
*I count my blessings
instead of my troubles.*



FREESTYLE FRIDAY

Get yourself some sticky notes. Any time you need to (and that may be every single day), write on the note a positive message to yourself. It could be anything from “Today you are announced as Teacher of the Year!” to “Way to not spill your coffee on your white shirt!” Now post that where you will see it. The bathroom mirror, the dashboard of your car, your computer monitor at school. Keep that positive flow going!

TODAY’S INTENTION:
*EVERY. SINGLE. DAY. I find at least one
positive that keeps me going.*



SILENT SATURDAY

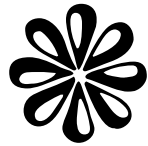
Life can be difficult and sad, maddening and downright unbearable. Everyone has negative thoughts. Trying to deny them will only make you more anxious and frustrated. Noticing that a thought is negative is the first step, acknowledging that it is okay to have that thought is next. Finally, choosing to think about the situation in a new way (focusing on solutions or finding the lesson) can get you back into a better space. The more you consciously practice changing your outlook, the easier it will become.

*** Depression and anxiety can be serious medical issues. If you have thoughts of harming yourself or others or if you feel as though you cannot control your sadness or stress, please seek out professional help. Support is there for you. The world needs you and your beautiful soul. ***

TODAY'S INTENTION:

I acknowledge and accept that I will have negative thoughts. I choose to change my outlook when necessary.

YOUR
COMFORT
ZONE





SERENITY SUNDAY

To grow and evolve as human and spiritual beings, we must embrace risk. I do not mean jumping out of a plane necessarily but rather taking steps to overcome fear, to work through preconceived ideas and bias, to challenge our minds and hearts. Today, don't just follow a path, create your own.

TODAY'S INTENTION:

*I say yes to ideas just outside of
my comfort zone.*



MOTIVATION MONDAY

Baby steps lead us to bigger, transformative changes. To expand your outlook, to grow in skill and art, to broaden your worldview, try one new thing each day. A new food. A new route to work. Say hello to a new person. Try to teach in a way you have been nervous about trying. Do it every day and see where your new experiences lead you.

TODAY'S INTENTION:

I try something new every day.



TRUTHFUL TUESDAY

Think about water. In a pond where there is little to no current, the water becomes murky and stagnant, smelling of rotting things, becoming covered with algae. Gross.

Then think of a river, with its current that rushes and relaxes yet always keeps moving. The river is constantly pushing, growing, arriving at new places, taking on different boundaries. Its power is a force to be reckoned with. Push forward like the river, sometimes slowly, sometimes with a rush of energy to discover just where you can go and what you can do!

TODAY'S INTENTION:

My ability to grow depends on my willingness to push the boundaries of my comfort zone.



WELL-BEING WEDNESDAY

Very few people, I would guess, enjoy feeling uncomfortable. Heart racing, palms sweating, that bit of nausea making your stomach uneasy and leaving acid in the back of your throat. Trying something new, taking a risk, even a very thoroughly calculated one can make us feel uncomfortable and that is okay.

Observe how that discomfort feels to you and respond to it with self-compassion and love, root for yourself with positive self-talk. Self-compassion does not mean to give yourself an easy way out, for that is apt to cause an even worse feeling, that of regret. Work through that discomfort. It won't go away but as you observe it and move through it, dealing with it will become easier.

TODAY'S INTENTION:

I allow feelings of discomfort and respond to them with love and self-compassion.



THANKFUL THURSDAY

I will admit that I have judged a student or a colleague the first time I laid eyes on him or her. I sized up how they walked, talked, dressed. The hairstyle, the language, who they hung out with, how “loud” they were. I put that person neatly in a box of “trouble-maker,” “excellent student,” “whiner,” “stoner,” “attention-seeker,” “doesn’t want to learn,” “brat.” I will also admit that 99% of the time, I was wrong. And many of those times, the students, or the teachers I had the most bias against, I learned the most from and grew the closest with.

Reflect on those you know and those you think you know. Encourage your students to challenge your ideas and notions respectfully as you do the same for them. It is the key to growth.

TODAY’S INTENTION:

*I am thankful for those who challenge
my biases and assumptions.*



FEARLESS FRIDAY

Often, we not only carry preconceived ideas about other people but about ourselves as well. The ideas we have concerning our limitations and liabilities do not stem from self-awareness but rather from whatever parent, teacher, sibling, or friend felt the need to express an opinion. Think about what you perceive you are and how you might challenge that assumption to find your truth.

TODAY'S INTENTION:

*I push past my perceived limitations
with strength and support.*



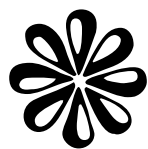
SILENT SATURDAY

Keeping yourself challenged is often exhausting physically and mentally. Take time to rest up for all the new ways you will find to move forward in the weeks, months, and years to come.

TODAY'S INTENTION:

*I rest in my cocoon of comfort,
revitalizing myself
for the challenges to come.*

EXHALE





SERENITY SUNDAY

Often unconsciously, under stress, we hold our breath. In doing so, we create more stress, more tension, more pain. Breathing is the key to releasing that panicky hold on our lungs, on our muscles, on our minds. Exhale.

TODAY'S INTENTION:

In times of frantic preparation, I exhale.



MEDITATIVE MONDAY

Running around five minutes before the bell to get things ready. Starting a new unit. Starting a new semester. Starting to teach a new class. Beginnings can be stressful. Remember to exhale and feel the tension rush out of your body.

TODAY'S INTENTION:

In the stress of beginnings, I exhale.



TEACHABLE TUESDAY

You have seen in cartoons, I'm sure, the image of a person getting so frustrated or angry that steam blows out of their ears. Instead of letting that build up inside of you, exhale.

TODAY'S INTENTION:

In times of frustration, I exhale.



WELL-BEING WEDNESDAY

Maybe you have been unconsciously holding your breath, waiting for results or answers. For that relief to come, you must exhale.

TODAY'S INTENTION:
In times of relief, I exhale.



THANKFUL THURSDAY

A deep breath in and a powerful exhale brings gratitude for life to your entire system. In, out. Feel gratitude for the rhythm of life.

TODAY'S INTENTION:

In times of gratitude, I exhale.



FEARLESS FRIDAY

I have this image of someone, summoning up their courage, standing tall, taking in a deep breath. But it is not until that person exhales that they can take action— brave action—to do what must be done. Exhale.

TODAY'S INTENTION:

*In summoning my courage to act,
I exhale.*

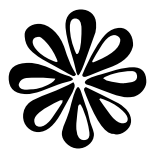


SILENT SATURDAY

Take a breath or two today and exhale with Lion's Breath—stick your tongue out, stretch your face, make a weird noise of release— and let it go! Let all that no longer serves you, let all the stress and frustration of the week come flying out with that wild, noisy, fantastic exhale. Repeat as needed!

TODAY'S INTENTION:
To relax, I exhale.

NOURISHMENT





SERENITY SUNDAY

Try something today. Instead of automatically reading the news or Facebook or Twitter, consciously choose to read something that nourishes your mind, something that feeds it with the motivation, encouragement, and information it needs to send you into the week ahead feeling good. Keep it up all week and feel the difference.

TODAY'S INTENTION:

I nourish my mind with motivating reads.



MOTIVATION MONDAY

Before you put a single morsel into your mouth, ask yourself, “what does this food do for my body?” Does it give you true energy? Does it help your digestion? Does it improve your mood? Does it power your brain?

If instead, you come up with something like, “it sugars me up for the time being” or “there is no nutritional value,” try something else. Consciously choose to nourish your body with what it needs.

TODAY’S INTENTION:

I nourish my body with healthy foods.



TEACHABLE TUESDAY

We are mostly water. Our blood, which delivers oxygen to every part of our bodies, is 90% water. From digestion and kidney function to maintaining a healthy weight and regulating body temperature, we need it to function the way we should, to be our best. So, drink water. End of story. (Plus, staying hydrated helps reduce wrinkles.)

TODAY'S INTENTION:

I nourish my skin and body through proper hydration.



WELL-BEING WEDNESDAY

Unconsciously, breathing keeps us alive. When we take time to breathe consciously, we enjoy the added benefit of calming our minds and our body. Visualize the inhaling of ease and calm and the exhaling of all that is stressing us out. Breathe and feel the life it brings.

TODAY'S INTENTION:
*I nourish my lungs with clean,
deep breaths.*



THANKFUL THURSDAY

Begin a practice of gratitude. Whether you prefer a fancy journal where you'll write about five people/things you are grateful for each day or whether you scribble one thing on a post-it every morning, the act of intentional gratitude will bring authentic positivity to your life.

TODAY'S INTENTION:

I nourish my soul with gratitude.



FREESTYLE FRIDAY

My husband and my children are four of a kind. Each one blessed with a dry, witty sense of humor that never ceases to make me laugh, even when I am suffering the dourest mood. Who or what makes you laugh? A book? A show? A person? Feed your soul with laughter, not just when you are feeling down but rather a steady diet of giggles. Joy will fuel your soul.

TODAY'S INTENTION:

I nourish my soul with laughter.



SILENT SATURDAY

The older I get, the more I understand and feel my connection to the Earth. On a winter morning, I can look up at a leafless oak and see the shape of my lungs. In the spring, the mother squirrel in that same tree reminds me of myself when my children were small, running around trying to keep them in one spot, all the while keeping an eye out for anything or anyone who might harm them. In the summer, the sunlight fills me from the inside out and in the fall, I feel deep gratitude for a bountiful harvest.

Plant flowers or a tree. Stop and pick up a rogue plastic bag and put it in the trash. Relocate that ladybug that accidentally got into the house, placing it in the grass in the yard. Take care of Mother Earth. It is the only home we have.

TODAY'S INTENTION:

I nourish myself by caring for the Earth.

Thank you for reading this sample of
Daily Intentions
for the Classroom Teacher.
I hope you are enjoying it!

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and other creative projects at...

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