

**BIG IDEAS THAT WILL
CHANGE THE WAY YOU TEACH**

**BIG IDEA...
Emotion &
Action**

Excerpts from Keynotes and Presentations
DR. JACK TIERNEY



“If we teachers and educators can tap into the genuine emotions driving student behavior, we can reinforce those that lead to responsible social, civil, and moral action.”

Human emotions are funny...

not “ha-ha” funny, but kind of “curiously funny.”

Take for example the definitely not funny
story of **Ozzie the Duck**.



“Ozzie the Duck”



Long-story-short, this duck shows up at a park one day and takes up residence in the pond.

The duck is immediately embraced by the community who name it "Ozzie."

For three years, Ozzie remains a favorite to visitors until one day a teenager stomps the bird to death.

The community is outraged!

Emotions run high!

Action is taken!



A 15 year boy was arrested and fined.

A college scholarship “in the duck’s name” was established.

A fund was set up to buy video cameras to protect the remaining ducks whose names were not released.

Another fund, soliciting pennies from school children was set up to pay for a bronze sculpture in memory of Ozzie. The statue was completed and dedicated two years later.

The grisly murder of a beloved duck that inspired all this emotion and action took place in 2011.

During that same year, 12,664 human beings were murdered in the USA, 8,583 of them by guns. ([source](#))



This reveals, we think, some curiously funny characteristics of emotions:

Curiously Funny Characteristic Number One



The intensity of human emotion is often negatively correlated with the severity of the source event.

The more severe the event,
the less intense the emotion.

Thus, the death of a duck may inspire scholarships and statues, while the deaths of literally thousands of people might not.

Curiously Funny Characteristic Number Two

Emotions make us want to do something, to act.

But, when an emotion inspiring situation (e.g., 12,000 murders) seems so overwhelming, we suppress the need to do something about it and focus on what we think we can control (duck security).



Curiously Funny Characteristic Number Three



Emotions fade over time.

The need to act diminishes.

Sometimes it disappears completely
if not reinforced.





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Presentation/Keynote: Educating in a Time of Student Empowerment:

In this engaging keynote/presentation Dr. Jack Tierney describes his four-step “FEEL – THINK - PREP – ACT” framework for educating in a time of student empowerment drawing on research and focusing on “big ideas” and “do-able” applications.

Workshop I: Educator Beliefs / Articulation and Consensus Building:

Dr. Jack Tierney engages educators in active discussion around salient issues such as: school shootings and violence, student activism, curricular vs social responsibilities, belief systems, brain-based learning, and facilitates consensus building on school-based responses.

Workshop II: Designing for Student Empowerment: Activity/Lesson Development:

Dr. Tierney guides educators through the process of designing standards-based learning activities, lessons, and curricular modifications that empower students to speak up and participate in civil society.

Workshop III: Facilitating Student Empowerment: Programs and Methods:

Dr. Tierney summarizes recent research and program development and facilitates planning, preparing, and supporting school-sponsored social-conscious student activity.