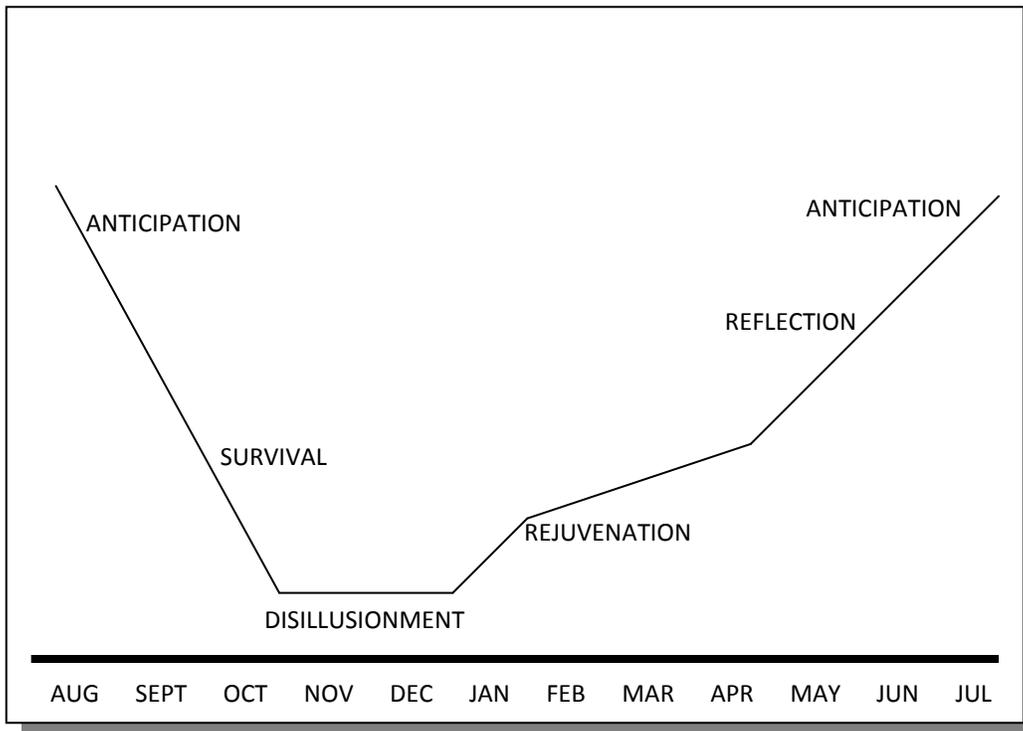


Phases of First Year

(based on and adapted from Moir, E., New Teacher Center)



First year teaching presents a difficult challenge for everyone. Equally challenging is the task of finding out what assistance new teachers need and when and how they need it. Moir (1990, 1999) and her colleagues, in their observations of new teacher growth and development, have defined phases teachers move through during their first year. While not every teacher moves through this exact sequence in these predicted periods of time, understanding these phases can be helpful for both new teacher and mentor. It can define what kind of help is needed at a particular point in the new teacher's development.

ANTICIPATION PHASE- Aug-Sept

The anticipation phase begins during the student teaching portion of pre-service preparation. The closer student teachers get to completing their assignment, the more excited and anxious they become about their first teaching positions. They tend to romanticize the role of the teacher and the position. New teachers enter the profession

with a tremendous commitment to making a difference and a somewhat idealistic view of how to accomplish their goals. This feeling of excitement carries new teachers into the first few weeks of school. The same can be true for the experienced educator who has secured a new position in a different district.

"I was elated to get the job but terrified about going from the simulated experience of student teaching to being the person completely in charge." (OR going from being the person in charge in a previous position to being the new person once again.)

Helpful suggestions for this time:

- Mentor and mentee meet informally before school starts.
- Share materials, ideas, and suggestions.
- Get acquainted with building and district, policies and procedures.
- Establish a regular mentor and mentee contact schedule for the first month of school.

SURVIVAL PHASE- Oct

The first month of school can be overwhelming. New staff are learning a lot at a very rapid pace. New teachers are instantly bombarded with a variety of problems and situations they had not anticipated. Despite previous experience and increased field experiences and required courses in teacher preparation programs, new teachers are caught off guard by the realities of teaching.

During the survival phase most new teachers are struggling to keep their head above water. They become very focused and consumed with the day-to-day routine of teaching. There is little time to stop and reflect on their experiences. New teachers spend up to 70 hours a week on school work. Particularly overwhelming is the constant need to develop curriculum. Teachers veteran to a district routinely recycle excellent lessons and units from the past. The new teacher, still uncertain of what will really work, must develop much of this for the first time. Even depending on unfamiliar prepared curriculum such as textbooks is enormously time consuming.

Although tired and surprised by the amount of work, first year teachers usually maintain a tremendous amount of energy and commitment during the survival phase.

“I thought I’d be busy, like when I was student teaching, but this is crazy. I’m feeling like I’m constantly running. It’s hard to focus on other aspects of my life.”

“I thought there would be more time to get everything done. It’s like working three jobs: 7:30-3:30, 3:30-6:00, with more time spent in the evening and on weekends.”

Helpful suggestions for this time:

- Hold joint planning sessions for time management and instructional units.
- Emphasize personal and professional informal contacts.

DISILLUSIONMENT PHASE- Nov-Dec

After six to eight weeks of non-stop work, new teachers enter the disillusionment phase. The intensity and length of the phase varies among teachers. The extensive time commitment, the realization that things are probably not going as smoothly as they want, and low morale contribute to this period of disenchantment. New teachers begin questioning both their commitment and their competence. Many new teachers become physically ill during this phase from the added stress and insufficient sleep.

Compounding an already difficult situation is the fact that new teachers are confronted with several new events during this time frame. They are faced with back-to-school night, parent conferences, completing report cards for the first time, and their first formal evaluation by the site administrator. Each of these important milestones places an already vulnerable individual in a very stressful situation.

At this point, the accumulated stress of the first year teacher coupled with months of excessive time allotted to teaching, often strains relationships with family members and friends. This is a very difficult and challenging phase for new educators. They express self-doubt, have lower self-esteem, and question their professional commitment. In fact, getting through this phase may be the toughest challenge they face as a new teacher.

“I thought I’d be focusing more on curriculum and less on classroom management and discipline. I’m stressed because I have some very problematic students who are low academically, and I think about them every second my eyes are open.”

Helpful suggestions for this time:

- Establish a regular mentor and mentee contact schedule.
- Share time management and instructional strategies.
- Discuss hexter/quarter/ semester end.
- Celebrate success.

REJUVENATION PHASE- Jan-Febr-Mar-Apr

The rejuvenation phase is characterized by a slow rise in the new teacher's attitude toward teaching. It generally begins in January. Having a winter break makes a tremendous difference for new teachers. It allows them to resume a more normal lifestyle with plenty of rest, food, exercise, and time for family and friends. This vacation is the first opportunity that new teachers have for organizing materials and planning curriculum. It is a time for them to sort through materials that have accumulated and prepare new ones. This breath of fresh air gives novice teachers a broader perspective with renewed hope. They seem ready to put past problems behind them. A better understanding of the system, an acceptance of the realities of teaching, and a sense of accomplishment helps to rejuvenate new teachers. Through their experiences in the first half of the year, beginning teachers gain new coping strategies and skills to prevent, reduce, or manage many problems they are likely to encounter in the second half of the year. Many feel a great sense of relief that they've made it through the first half of the year. During this phase, new teachers focus on curriculum development, long-term planning, and teaching strategies.

The rejuvenation phase tends to last into spring with many ups and downs along the way. Toward the end of this phase, new teachers begin to raise concerns about whether they can get everything done prior to the end of school. They also wonder how their students will do on assessments, questioning once again their own effectiveness as a teacher.

"I'm fearful of these big tests. Can you be fired if your kids do poorly? I don't know enough about them to know what I haven't taught, and I'm sure it's a lot."

Helpful suggestions for this time:

- Participate in joint planning sessions.
- Encourage collaboration with colleagues.

-continued next column-

- Attend professional development opportunities.
- Explore team teaching.
- Discuss curriculum pacing.
- Discuss student performance.
- Discuss year end schedules, exams, & activities.

REFLECTION PHASE- May

The reflection phase, beginning in May, is a particularly invigorating time for new educators. Reflecting over the year with other new teachers, support teachers, or by themselves, they highlight events that were successful and those that were not. They think about the various changes that they plan to make the following year in management, curriculum, and teaching strategies. The end is in sight and they have almost made it; but more importantly, a vision emerges as to what their second year will look like which brings them to a new phase of anticipation.

"I think that for next year I'd like to start the letter puppets earlier in the year to introduce the kids to more letters."

Helpful suggestions for this time:

- Identify successes.
- Analyze student performance.
- Connect personal learnings with application to future decisions.
- Focus on end-of-year routines.

NEW ANTICIPATION PHASE- June

New teachers are ready to celebrate successes and prepare for year two.

Helpful suggestions for this time:

- Explore student achievement.
- Identify professional "turning points".
- Long range plan next year.

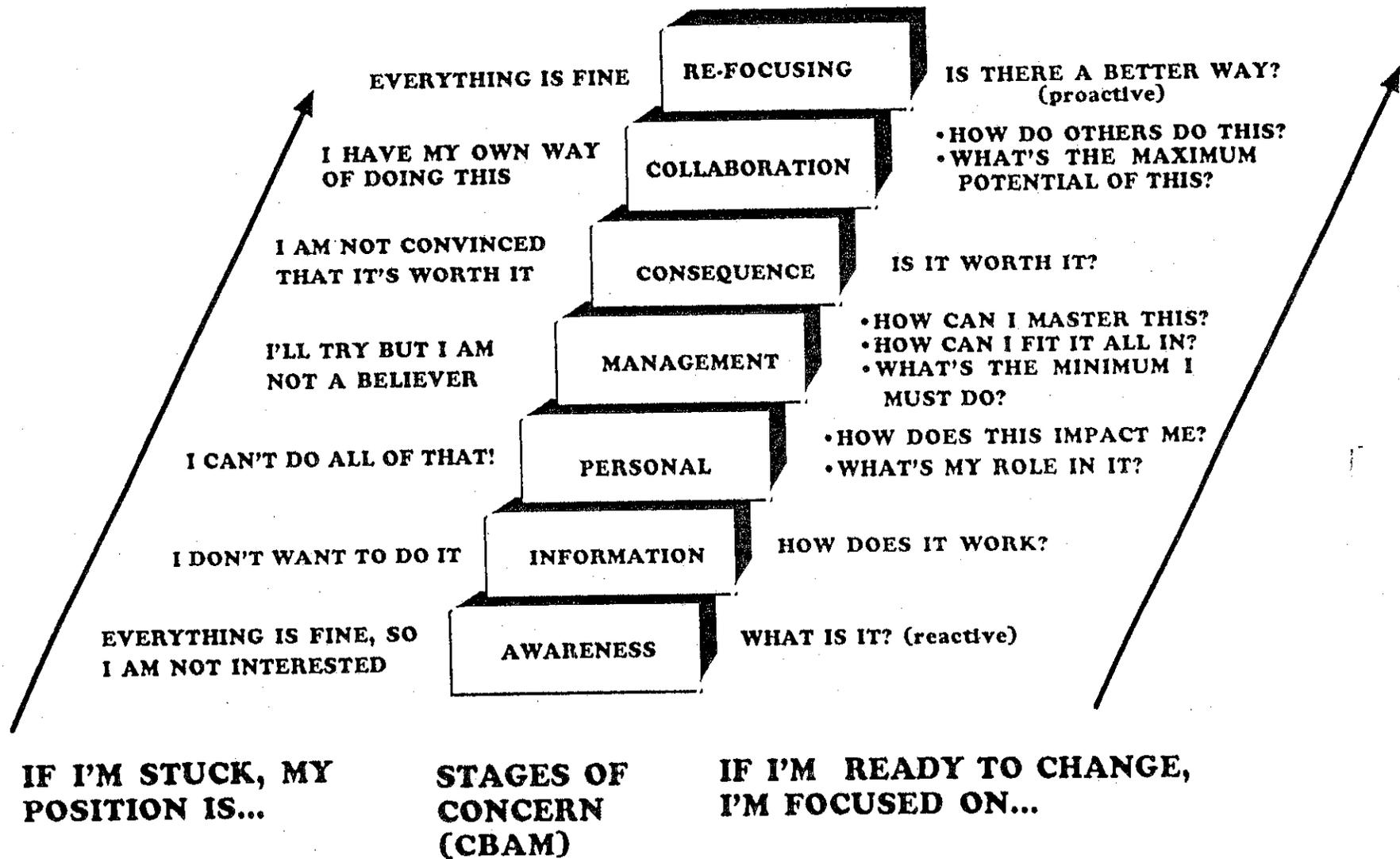
Phases of First Year

PHASE: _____

New Teacher Behavior
(what it looks and feels like)

Support and/or Assistance
(what new staff and/or mentors can do)

THE STAGES OF DEVELOPMENT



This model of change is adapted by Barry Sweeny and is based on the Concerns-Based Adoption Model (CBAM) which was developed by staff at the University of Texas - Austin. Refer to Taking Charge of Change by Hord, et. al. an ASCD book.

Styles of Mentoring – Mentoring Roles

<u>STYLE OR ROLE</u>	<u>MENTEE</u>	<u>MENTOR</u>	<u>LIMITATION</u>
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>RESPONDER</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mentor encourages mentee to ask for help • Mentor provides requested assistance with areas of concern 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trusts mentor, rapport has been established • Receives help with major areas of concern 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Willing to help • Assists only when asked, doesn't intrude in mentee's decision-making 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many day-to-day problems may not be dealt with constructively.
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>COLLEAGUE / COLLABORATOR</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mentor and mentee have a strong personal relationship • Mentor frequently initiates informal visits • When mentee expresses a concern or problem, mentor provides assistance related to the area of concern 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receives substantial help with identified areas of concern • Is more comfortable, tries own ideas • Still needs help on new, unfamiliar tasks • Asks fewer but better questions • Seeks feedback on plans and decisions • Often makes independent decisions and plans • Knows 'big picture' but sometimes forgets it • Is more realistic about own ability, improvements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides additional time and commitment • Promotes mentee decision-making and responsibility • Limits answers; promotes mentee's thinking through reflective questions • Promotes mentee's use of long-term planning • Reinforces and challenges mentee to experiment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New teacher, with limited experience, may determine the extent of professional growth.
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>INITIATOR</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mentor facilitates the professional growth of mentee • Mentor regularly makes suggestions to promote growth in addition to providing requested assistance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benefits from mentor's expertise • Takes the initiative, generates ideas and solutions • Seeks independence but remains collaborative • Still asks questions and seeks to learn • Values feedback and other perspectives • Is beginning to appreciate interdependence • Decisions and actions align with beliefs • Risks to learn and keeps sense of perspective 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has substantial teaching experience • Observes mentee and provides non-evaluative feedback • Supports mentee's ideas and decisions • Limits questions to only the most significant topics • Reinforces effective practices and thinking • Seeks mutual learning and growth opportunities • Experiences professional growth through mentoring 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional growth is limited only by the potential of the mentee and the mentor's expertise in mentoring.

Mentoring Reflections

Give One – Get One

<p>Give One My Mentoring Idea:</p>	<p>Get One</p> <p>From: Contact info:</p>	<p>Get One</p> <p>From: Contact info:</p>
<p>Get One</p> <p>From: Contact info:</p>	<p>Get One</p> <p>From: Contact info:</p>	<p>Get One</p> <p>From: Contact info:</p>
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