

There are two kinds of people in the world, those who believe there are two kinds of people in the world and those who don't.

Robert Benchley, *Benchley's Law of Distinction*

There are two types of teachers in the classroom,

... those who ..., and those who

I find myself constantly experimenting with life. I always seem to find something new that interests me. One of the most challenging sentences I ever heard as a teacher was “there are two types of teacher who have been teaching for 20 years ... those with 20 years of experience, and those with one year of experience repeated 20 times.” I took a hard look at myself and started questioning whether I was growing as a teacher, or whether I was just happy to doddle along doing the same as I always did — regardless of my students.

Over the years I have had the privilege of meeting many caring, motivated, interested teachers. Despite being tossed and blown by the winds of government policy and budget cuts, they somehow manage to hold on to their vision and they delight in the success of their students. They serve as an inspiration and a hope to me. I often meet them at training sessions — they are interested enough to attend a workshop at the end of a long day, or come to an APPI conference on a weekend! I am proud of these teachers, but unfortunately there are not enough of them.

Next year's conference will focus on teachers ... if you have not been to an APPI conference for a long time, or if you have never been — consider making it a priority for the coming year. You will meet colleagues who go through the same stuff as you, but who year after year find the annual conference a time of refreshment and renewal of their teaching vision. You will find encouragement, fun, ideas, and a space where you will feel supported.

If you usually come, why not encourage newer (and older) colleagues to come with you? — start saving now (2 coffees a day for the next 6 months will cover most of the cost ... you'll get free coffee at the conference to make up for the caffeine deficit ;) — it's only expensive if you wait until March to decide and haven't put any cash aside!)

Well, that's my recommendation for the academic year ahead — be a bit selfish and invest in YOU — come and get motivated.

See you there?!

Neil Mason