

# Teaching: A Way of No Return

(粉筆生涯不歸路)

by Grace Hsu (許慧伶)

Whether teaching is among the most **stressful occupations** throughout the world **varies** in opinion from person to person. In my case, I am 100 percent **behind** the **International Labor Organization's** report that teaching is one of the top **nail-biting** jobs. Judging from my personal experience, I list the following **factors** that **contribute to** a teacher's **burnout**.

教書是否為全世界最有壓力的職業之一，觀點因人而異。就我情況而言，我是百分之百支持國際勞工組織的報導——教書是前幾名最令人焦躁不安的工作之一。根據個人的經驗，我舉出下列一些造成老師感到筋疲力竭的因素。

stressful (adj.) 有壓力的	vary in (v. phr.) 不同
occupation (n.) 職業	behind (adj.)/ support (v.) 支持
nail-biting (adj.) 咬指甲的；緊張的	Factor (n.) 因素
to contribute to (v.phr.) 造成；有助於	Burnout (n.)：耗盡體力
International Labor Organization 國際勞工組織	

1. Teaching in the information age is a **challenge**. **To keep up with** the times and **avoid lagging behind** in the **TEFL field**, a teacher must continue **absorbing up-to-date** knowledge and working on **creative** methods to **motivate** students. Meanwhile, a teacher has to be concerned about his or her own future, especially **promotion based on academic research**. It's because people say "**Publish or perish**." However, it is **regrettable** that an old dog like me sometimes has difficulty learning new **tricks**.

第一、在資訊時代施教是項挑戰。為了跟上時代且避免在以英語為外國語言的教學領域中落後，老師要不斷地吸收最新的知識並研發出有創意的教學法，來引起學生的學習動機。同時，老師也必須為自己的未來憂心，尤其是學術研究升等。因為，人人都說「不出版，就滅絕」。然而，令人遺憾的是，像我這樣的老狗要學新把戲有時候已感到時不我予了。

Challenge (n.) 挑戰；考驗	to motivate (v.) 引起動機
to keep up with (v. phr.) 趕上	promotion (n.) 升等；晉級
to lag behind (v.phr.) 落後	based on (adj.phr.) 以...為依據
up-to-date (adj.) 最新的；現代的	academic (adj.) 學術的
field (n.) 領域	research (n.) 研究
to absorb (v.) 吸收	publish (v.) 出版
Regrettable (adj.)：令人遺憾的	trick (n.)：訣竅；花樣
Creative (adj.)：創意的	perish (v.) 毀滅；死亡
TEFL (Teaching English as a Foreign Language)：英語為外文的教學	

2. Teaching is a matter of **conscience**. My **philosophy** is that the materials covered should be **related to** current issues **as well as** students' daily life. Every year, I **make every effort** to change the topics so as to prevent repeating **the same old stuff**. Needless to say, I end up busily making up and **photo-copying handouts** for students.

第二、教書是良心的事。我的理念是所上的教材應與時下議題和學生的日常生活相關。

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conscience (n.) 良心

philosophy (n.) 哲學；人生觀

to be related to (v.phr.) 與...有關

as well as (prep.phr.) 既...又

to make an effort (v.phr.) 努力

the same old stuff 老套

needless to say (phr.) 不用說

to photocopy = copy (v.) 影印

handout (n.) 講義

3. A **responsible** teacher, who pushes students to study hard, seems to have **never-ending** examination papers or **assignments to grade**. I often **tease** myself that I ask for trouble, just like a moth constantly flying into lights. Why should I **sacrifice** time and create **additional** work for the **neither rewarding nor appreciated task**?

第三、有責任感、會逼學生用功讀書的老師，似乎有無盡的考卷和作業要批改。我常常自我解嘲自己就像飛蛾般不斷地撲向燈火，自找麻煩。既然吃力不討好，幹嘛犧牲時間給自己增添工作量呢？

Responsible (adj.) 負責的

never-ending (adj.) 永無停止的

Assignment (n.) 作業

to grade (v.) 評閱

to tease (v.) 揶揄

to sacrifice (v.) 犧牲

Additional (adj.) 額外的

neither...nor (conj.) 既不...也不

Rewarding (adj.) 值得做

appreciated (adj.) 被感激欣賞的

Task (n.) 工作

4. **Apart from** teaching, an educator is required to patiently **steady** the **unstable** and handle students' **psychological** or **physical** problems. Moreover, when guiding the young, a teacher must act like a **sympathetic** and **forgiving religious** person. Of course, it is better for a teacher to follow the **trend** of popular teen culture **lest** he or she be shocked by "**Bow Wow**". You can image the above sometimes put a teacher in a **dilemma**. Unlike a blue-collar manual worker, an **enthusiastic** teacher **gets involved in** a lot of mental activities. What a job!

第四、除了當「教書匠」外，老師還須耐心安撫情緒不穩的學生及處理他們的心身問題。此外，在引領年輕人時，老師須像個慈悲、寬恕的宗教家。當然，他最好能懂得青少年流行文化的趨勢，以免在聽到「家有賤狗」時，震撼不已。你可以想像出以上種種有時會讓做「人師」的進退兩難。不同於體力勞動的藍領階

級，認真的老師投入在許多腦力活動中。教書的學問太大了。

apart from (prep. phr.) 除了...之外	trend (n.) 趨勢
to steady (v.) 穩定	lest (conj.) 以免
the unstable (the + adj.) 不穩定的人	bow wow (int.) 汪汪(狗叫)
psychological (adj.) 心理的	in a dilemma (prep.phr.) 處於困境
physical (adj.) 生理的	blue-collar (adj.) 藍領的
sympathetic (adj.) 富同情心的	manual (adj.) 用手操作的
forgiving (adj.) 仁慈、寬大的	enthusiastic (adj.) 熱誠的
religious (adj.) 宗教的	to get involved in (v.phr.) 專注於

In a time when both **respect** for teachers and **sticking to** work are no more **virtues**, there are some unknown teachers **concentrating on** the career. Although studying and teaching **occupy** most of my time (weekends and holidays included), yet I enjoy such sweet **suffering**. That's why I am still single now and have **been devoted to** the **post** for ten years. If time came back and I had the chance to make the choice again, would teaching be my top **priority** · ! ?

在一個尊師和敬業不再是美德的時代，還有些默默無聞的教師努力工作。雖然讀書和教書佔據我大部份的時間（包括周末及假日），但我依舊執著於這份甜蜜的痛苦。這就是為什麼我到目前仍是單身，十年來也一直守在這崗位的原因。如果時光再倒流，有機會重新選擇，粉筆生涯會是我的最愛嗎。！？

respect (n.) 尊敬	suffering (n.) 痛苦
to stick to (v.phr.) 堅守	post (n.) 職位
virtue (n.) 美德	to be devoted to (v.phr.) 奉獻
to concentrate on (v.phr.) 全神貫注於	priority (n.) 優先考慮的事
to occupy (v.) 佔據	

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argument (n.) : 論點