

# October 2023



Time is flying by so fast this year. Bottom line....I've got absolutely nothing out of this world to report. Doldrums! I feel like an airline that is in a holding pattern over some busy airport.

School is a blur. The days zip on by because I am so busy teaching in the mornings. Every thirty minutes, a new class arrives. I hardly know their names. I can barely say hello. Thirty minutes in total for an elementary class is actually more like 22 minutes. Twenty-five 9yr olds need several minutes both to enter and then again to leave. There are no transition times set into

our current schedule, just 8:00-8:30 or 10:30-11:00 for classes. Yes, it's pretty hectic this year.

The best part of this year, for me, is based on discussions I had last year with my principal. He promised to do his best to protect my afternoons for doing my corporate tech job. It's working, so far. Knock on a whole lot of wood.

We continue to have more and more students enter our school. The company keeps hiring. The kids keep coming. Almost every fourth grade is up to 25 students. The third grade is climbing just as quickly! Not a day goes by without me filling out a new card for a new student.

In my case, it is a short procedure to look up their student number and password. Then I

have to assign them one of my lab computers and make sure a fellow student catches them up (at least) on how to login the first time. If all goes well, the system is synced and allows the new student to login.

Now put that small procedure into my 30 minute lesson for that class. I've devised a method that allows students to go back and learn on their own. I have a website with videos of each lesson I do in person. The videos match what I teach in class, with a little extra.

St. Same Times

# Dan and Leslie

## “Do you drink? Good. You’re coming over!”

Dan is my next door neighbor. His apartment is literally across the sidewalk from mine. Just a spit away.

One weekend, I decided to fix my gate. Why? I’ve only been in this apartment since November and shit is already falling apart. Imagine that. Anyway, I went out with a screwdriver, intent on leveling the door hinges so the tongue of the doorknob would fit properly and the door would stay closed.

“Hey. Do you drink? Good. You’re coming over. I’m Dan. Next door.” What a friendly guy! So I went over. For the next four hours, I sat on his porch and talked life with him and his girlfriend, Leslie.

## Boo! Fast!

Joey and I have committed to losing weight. Where have you heard that before? No choice actually. I’m tired of being an unhealthy “fat guy” in my 50s. So be it. I have started a long journey into fitness and new admiration for my own body. Truly. As I write this, I am on break from over a week of Intermittent Fasting, swimming in the mornings, and the nigh impossible feat of getting off SUGAR. Someone should research how difficult it is for an American man of 54 to get off sugar. It will probably rated right up there with getting off heroin, coke, or smoking. I wonder how many of my 54 years have been sugar based? At least 45 of them involved an increase in sugar intake. How could it have been avoided in my early years?

So that is the biggest change in life this month. IMF - intermittent fasting is basically eating during a specific time period each day. My window has been 5-7am. I figure, why not just go for it. Make this happen. I’ve dedicated the other 22 hours of the day to water intake and daily multivitamins. The body is amazing at adapting. I’ll see this through! Of course, I will open the window slowly to 4-6-8 hours as I get into the IMF. Sorry if I’m grumpy. I’m on a mission. And now I’m going full bore rowing, walking added to my swim. Swim and stretch hour is mornings. The row/walk will be evening activities.

Evenings are the most difficult for my body. Inserting action will make evenings that much more productive. Everyone will see a much different me in a few months. Count on it. Call your bookie. Time for big changes.

Here is a smidgin of what I learned in one sitting:

Dan works at Ithra, where my friend Paul used to work. Dan’s been there around 4 years. He’s about my age and from New York? Leslie, his girlfriend of a year, is an Aramcon brat that teaches at a local Saudi school. Both are super friendly and enjoy simply sitting with friends on the porch drinking anything. Music, friends, conversation.

Dan is a bass player. Now I’m in a band. No name. No practice yet. I’m still in the early stages of the EWI. Dan has pegged me as the sax virtuoso to belt out arrangements of a variety of music, mostly 80’s rock. No pressure.

