

What Goes Around Comes Around



“You can do it, Sister,” my 3rd-grade student, Natalie, assured me, as I struggled to loosen a screw on a teaching-the-time clock, which I had borrowed from another teacher. It had hardly arrived in our classroom, when it stopped working. Natalie stayed after school to wait for her mother, who was also a teacher.

As I worked to open the back of the machine, I found myself saying, “But Natalie, this is really hard.” She reminded me again that I could do it.

When I realized the role reversal, I smiled to myself. I was say-

ing back to her what my students so often said to me when a task was difficult to accomplish, “But, Sister, this is hard!”

In my case, though, I told myself, it did seem impossible to budge the screw, having already worked on it for 10-15 minutes. I was ready to give up when Natalie challenged me with her comment. I wanted to respond, in fact, I likely did, “But this is REALLY HARD!”

Given the situation, I decided to keep trying. Much to my surprise, about 10 minutes later, I was able to loosen it and fix the clock!

Natalie had repeated to me what I had so often said to the children, “You can do it.” Regularly, I also invited them to say five times to themselves, “I can do it,” as they ticked it off on their figures. This often preceded a smile on their faces and a determination to keep on trying. Little did I anticipate that what had gone around, would come around to me, so naturally, just when I needed it. What an “aha” moment, what a gift!

Have you had such a “going-around” in your life?

