

Autumn 2020

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A Breath Of Fresh Air To Keep You Moving For Life

FITNESS

Rock Climbing In The Outdoors

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Connecting With Your Teen In 2020

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A letter from the Editor

We proudly present the latest edition of YOUTHWISE! A sincere thank-you to the wonderful contributors who passionately put in so much work with their editorials, and without whom, we could not do this. Nor could we without our generous supporters!

We certainly are in the midst of testing times, and I think TESTING is a very appropriate word in this situation. Unprecedented times (and I think when we have come out the other side of this, unprecedented is a word I do not want to hear for awhile!!) It is during these times that we see the best in people , and also the worst in people.

I was indulging in a cup of coffee inside a coffee shop over the weekend, with my beloved four legged child, Bob, tied up to one of the outside tables, and I noticed a group of middle aged bikers, resplendent in lycra, making for the table my dog was tied to. I thought crossly "Why THIS table? You have others to choose from" I went out to move him, with a very grumpy look on my face, when I suddenly realised that I was not being all that pleasant! I apologised to them and said" I'm sorry-I have just been to the supermarket, where was no milk, no bread, no meat and no fish, and it has obviously made me less pleasant than I normally would be!! We all (including a woman at an neighbouring table)

ended up sharing a coffee, talked and laughed, and I left that cafe with my spirits uplifted. The lesson I learned is, I need to do an occasional reality check on my emotions, and reactions. I am by no means perfect, as my children like to constantly remind me, but I am better than THIS!

I have taken an excerpt out of Scott Morrison's narrative:

"Stop Hoarding"

This is not who we are as people. It is not necessary for people to be hoarding. We do have food security ,and I would urge Australians to exercise calm. Think of others when we are at the supermarket.

We will get through this-we always do. We are Australians-we always do, and we will make sure that we will come out the other end and be better for it."

It is not often that I agree with politicians, but on this I do!! These are indeed worrying times, but I think you are either a "glass half full" person, or a "glass half empty" person. I choose to be the former. And I am very aware, as a parent, it is my responsibility to lead by example.

My parents/grandparents lived through war. I cannot imagine what that would have been like but I would imagine that they were testing times also! They survived them, as We will. Hopefully with prudence, kindness ,common sense and optimism.

We have gone through the GFC, we have gone through bush fires, to name but a few, and we have survived them. Aussies are known for

our resilience, for our "You'll be right, mate" attitude, for our generosity. United we stand, divided we fall.

For me, personally, living in fear is simply not an option. The only things I am doing differently now is that I am washing my hands more (much much more!!) and praying more! (much more!) and not being as socially interactive as I normally would. Life goes on. My father always told me that you gauge the measure of a man (person) by how he conducts himself during TRYING times.

So let us all be extra kind and considerate towards each other. Let our strength, hope and optimism shine through. If ever there was a time for resilience, positivity, optimism and kindness, it is now. We hope you enjoy this edition, and that by the next edition in October, we will be back to normal.

My new favourite expression is "when we are out of this-not IF but WHEN" The next few editions will contain some very interesting editorials.

I feel that it is our responsibility, as parents, to raise our children to be kind, compassionate ,respectful human beings, regardless of appearance, gender, religion or sexual orientation, and anything else that makes us different. There will be articles addressing some of the aforementioned, in the forthcoming editions.

Keep washing those hands diligently!! Stay safe. Stay kind. Stay positive.

Leigh Mary Leonard

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National Youth Mental Health Foundation

headspace is the National Youth Mental Health Foundation, providing early intervention mental health services to 12-25 year-olds. By ensuring help is accessed in early stages of young people's lives and providing a holistic model of support, **headspace** provides a safe space where they can get their mental health and wellbeing back on track.

headspace services cover four core areas: mental health, physical health (including sexual health), friendly and free or low cost. Young people and their families can access services face-to-face at one of 98 **headspace** centres across which can be located Australia at www.headspace.org.au, or via **headspace** - a national online and telephone counselling service at www.eheadspace.org.au.

Over the past 10 years, **headspace** has proudly provided over 1.8 million services through centres, online and over the phone, helping over 310,000 young people across Australia. **headspace** wants to ensure young people aged 12-25 have access to youth friendly mental health services, no matter where they live.

Alongside **headspace** centre, online and telephone support, specialised services are provided in the following areas:

- **headspace** School Support - a suicide postvention program, which assists Australian school communities to prepare for, respond to and recover from a suicide.
- Digital Work and Study Service - a dedicated team assisting young people aged 15-24 in education and work options.
- **headspace** Youth Early Psychosis Program - a program focusing on early intervention, aiming to improve the lives of young people, and their families, who are affected by psychosis.

HEADSPACE DONATIONS AND FUNDRAISING

There are many ways to support **headspace** and the work carried out in providing mental health and wellbeing support, information and services to young people and their families across Australia. **headspace** has helped hundreds of thousands of young people get their lives back on track and your support will assist us with our work.

Any donation generously provided to **headspace** goes towards community engagement and awareness, which can be specifically given towards a local centre or to National Office.

Donations to **headspace** National Office, ensures the promotion of the importance of seeking help, to break down stigma associated with mental health issues and to make sure every young person across Australia, as well as their friends and family, knows there is help available.

You can find out more about donations and fundraising through the 'Get Involved' page at www.headspace.org.au

SEEKING HELP

Getting support can help a young person to keep on track at school, study or work, as well as personal and family relationships. The sooner help is received, the sooner things can begin to improve.

headspace can help any young person aged 12-25 years-old, a family member or friend wanting to seek information on youth mental health.

These are just some of the reasons someone may seek help from **headspace**:

- If someone is feeling down, stressed or constantly worrying
- If someone doesn't feel like themselves anymore
- If someone isn't coping with school/uni/work or finding it difficult to concentrate
- If someone is feeling sick or worried about their health
- If someone has questions about, or wants to cut down on alcohol or other drug use
- If someone wants to talk about sexuality, gender identity or relationships
- If someone is having difficulties with family or friends
- If someone is concerned about sexual health or wants information about contraception
- If someone is being bullied, hurt or harassed
- If someone is worried about work or study or having money trouble

DID YOU KNOW?

One in four young people have experienced a mental health issue in the past 12 months - a higher prevalence than all other age groups. Alarmingly, suicide is the leading cause of death of young people, accounting for one third of all deaths.

Adolescence and early adulthood is a critical time in a person's life, with 75 per cent of mental health disorders emerging before the age of 25.



Empowering Young People to Solve Conflict and Reduce Bullying

By Jocelyne Chirnside

CONFLICT

Conflict is a normal part of life; we all experience it. It is rarely pleasant and it can be one of the primary causes of pain and stress in our lives, whatever our age! Few of us have been trained to manage and resolve it well.

One of our greatest needs as humans is to be connected and to feel that we belong. American psychologist, Abraham Maslow, in 1943 famously created the Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, identifying that after basic survival requirements are met, our next human need for health and wellbeing is to feel connected and feel we belong. The teenage years, can be an especially challenging time in relationships to feel we belong because changes are taking place physically and mentally which can impact us socially.

Most significantly the brain undergoes major reconstruction as it evolves from a child's way of thinking to an adult's. This dramatic development can trigger greater emotional responses putting added strain and stress on the ability to feel connected.

Conflict can create disconnection and isolation. Unresolved or poorly resolved conflict, can lead to loneliness, stress, mental and physical health problems, bullying, reduced work output and success, and a greater vulnerability to self-harm behaviours.

Few of us have been explicitly trained in the understanding, language and skills to manage our behaviours and emotions during conflict well. Despite the belief that, at times, others 'make us behave' particular ways, we ultimately all choose our own behaviours, responses, and how we manage our emotions. We either choose to have friendly and respectful interactions, or we choose conflict and disrespectful responses.

Sounds like a simple choice, but if you have not been empowered with the skills to resolve conflict, you can become frustrated and believe you are choosing good, friendly, respectful choices; however you are actually, unintentionally, contributing to the problem and causing conflict.

This can at times lead to us blaming the other person, thinking they are totally responsible, and not recognising that we also have a part to play.

Conflict is an action that hurts another person's body or feelings. It can be physical such as pushing, throwing something at someone, hitting, kicking or poking. Or it could be the more common emotional behaviours such as excluding, name calling, gossiping, teasing, taking things or rude gestures etc. Conflict can be accidental, done on purpose, a misunderstanding or the result of different perceptions.

Conflict exists in every community because we are each unique in our thoughts, expectations, values, beliefs, experiences, resources and skills, etc. These differences which make our world so wonderful, can also be the same differences that create conflict. Healthy communities are not void of conflict, rather they have the skills and are empowered to value individual differences and resolve their problems positively.

The great news is that we can all be empowered to respond constructively to conflict. When you can resolve conflict positively, you can feel more confident and connected, have healthier relationships, experience more fun, feel healthier, happier and be more successful. However, these skills don't come naturally to many of us. They require explicit teaching, practise and reflection in order for us to become confident in them. However, the rewards of persistence are huge.

DON'T CONFUSE CONFLICT WITH BULLYING

In many schools and workplaces, conflict and bullying are often confused. Where conflict can have constructive outcomes if handled well, bullying is predominantly destructive. Confusion can occur because the behaviours that cause conflict are the same as those that cause bullying. According to research there are three distinct elements to bullying which include:

- (1) an intent to hurt or threaten,
- (2) it is repeated conflict and, most significantly it has
- (3) a power difference.

The challenge with bullying is that the imbalance of power requires the target to either empower themselves or have the support of bystanders or adults for a healthier outcome. Bullying is serious and can have long term impact on the target's health and wellbeing. If you know how to resolve conflict, there is a greater chance that it will not be repeated and escalate into bullying.

This is a great reason to learn conflict resolution skills! In saying that, occasionally you may come across someone who is just intent on hurting you and does not want to stop, even if you do your best to use conflict resolution skills. If this ever happens, don't stay quiet! Get help. We are not meant to do life alone. Find someone who can help you be safe, solve the problem constructively if possible and move



on. Remember you can't choose other people's behaviour. The only behaviour you choose is your own! So be smart and stay safe.

THE COMMUNITY

Ultimate empowerment of young people requires a whole community. As the old African proverb says, 'It takes a village to raise a child'. When parents and teachers are reinforcing, modelling and understanding the power of words consistently, greater learning and adoption of good habits can occur.

There are many great ways of learning conflict resolution skills. One program being used in high schools is the BRIDGE BUILDERS® Leadership Program. It empowers young people to understand how to de-escalate or resolve conflict, and restore relationships. The three approaches below equip young people with a variety of strategies to use when facing difficult relationships.

DE-ESCALATING

De-escalating means: to reduce the intensity of a conflict or a potentially violent or hurtful situation. Suggested skills to use for de-escalation, such as asking them to stop or ignoring and not reacting, are well known, but many teenagers have found they are not very effective. However, there is good reason for this.

After collating much research and observing thousands of students around Australia, I have found that very rarely has the power of body



language, tone of voice or the use of assertive language been taught explicitly. For most of us it is assumed that we have these skills, almost as if we are born with them. But in reality, they require specific teaching, practise and persistence to master. Understanding how to do them properly empowers us for safer and happier relationships.

Without an understanding of these three important elements of communication, you can believe that you are choosing to de-escalate a situation but, in fact, you are communicating a very different message, and you may be actually escalating the problem.

RESOLVING

Resolving strategies are those where two or more people in a disagreement, conflict, or argument, work together to understand both perspectives and find a way to communicate to agree on a solution. Strategies such as these are by far the most powerful ways of being understood and understanding the other side of a conflict.

These require constructive communication skills. Many people believe they are talking out a problem, thinking they are resolving it, when in fact they are communicating a fight or flight response.

It is remarkable that something as minor as the position of your hands can express anger, fear, annoyance or frustration. Every part of our bodies reflects our emotions. If we don't calm down our body language, tone of voice or words first, it can make it much more difficult to resolve a problem.

RESTORING

Restoring strategies are skills that show respect and empathy. Their goal is to restore trust back into a relationship after a conflict has occurred. Being kind or saying sorry are very powerful skills, showing the other person that you care and you are accountable for your actions.

Research has found using these skills can also improve your own wellbeing. We actually do better physically and mentally when we are kind compared to when we hate and hurt others. So, when you make the effort to restore a relationship you are actually also being kind to yourself!

EMPOWERED FOR LIFE

By learning an appreciation of the inevitability of conflict, the difference between conflict and bullying, and strategies to deal with them both, we can make a huge contribution to our wellbeing, because we are wired for connection. So, don't be a victim of conflict. Be empowered and connect to others positively! Be BRIDGE BUILDERS®.

Jocelyne Chirnside
M.Ed.(Hons), Dip T.
www.empoweredforlife.com



FROM MAGAZINES TO SCREENS: TACKLING YOUNG PEOPLE'S EXPOSURE TO PORNOGRAPHY

By Brandon Friedman

THERE is no question about it: we are living in an unprecedented era. Access to technology is like the world has never seen it. We have direct access to the world in our very pockets; the touch of a finger, a swipe of the hand, or more recently, a glance of the eyes. We like to say we are in control of our own technology, but in reality, and as much as we try to deny it, it is in-fact technology controlling us.

While we accept the use of devices in our everyday life, we ignore the dark cloud hovering over our future generations, representing the question we refuse to confront:

HOW DO WE TAKE BACK CONTROL?

Our young ones know no different. And that's not their fault. They are born into technology. Unfortunately, increased access to technology has also increased potential access to harmful online material. Elephant Ed, a leading sex education provider in Australia, work with tens of thousands of young people every year.

Cont on next page >

In doing so, we gain a strong insight into young people's lives, helping them navigate the nuances and complexities of the online world. What has become apparent within schools over recent years is the undeniable fact that pornography has become the default sex educator.

No longer are magazines kept underneath a bed or hidden away for nobody to find. A 2017 Burnet Institute survey, studying pornography use in Australia, found four in five young men and almost three in four young women, from the age of 15, are viewing pornography on a weekly and monthly basis, respectively. Like I said, an unprecedented era.

Not only are young people viewing pornography in greater numbers and at higher frequencies, they are starting younger than ever. In fact, the same study showed the median age for first time exposure as 13 years old for boys and 16 years old for girls.

Exposure to pornography can have harmful effects on young people. Pornography creates a "sexual template" for young people to follow in their own sexual encounters. The problem, however, lies in the fact this template is fraught with distorted perceptions of what a real-life, healthy sexual relationship should look and feel like.

BODY IMAGE

Let's start with body image. When young people are exposed to pornography, they are burdened with unrealistic ideals about beauty and body image. They are made to feel as though they need to look a certain way.

This is reinforced through the myriad of sexualised images we see on billboards, buses and music videos pervading our everyday lives. From the air-brushed and photo-shopped models on social media to the surgically enhanced "stars" seen in pornography, we are constantly barraged with unrealistic representations of the human body. We are hidden from the unique beauty present in the diversity of shapes and sizes.

One can only imagine the immense pressure these ideals place on young people, and the ensuing anxiety around one's own sexual appeal. And the scary part? This pressure has prompted teens to seek to perfect their bodies, often through plastic surgery, to reflect what they see on their screens.

Only recently did we have a plastic surgeon stand up at a Parent Seminar and explain how she had been horrified by the number of teenage girls who approach her asking for labiaplasty surgery (a surgical procedure to "neaten" the labia). Not to mention the spike in laser hair removal.

Not surprising given Vannier, Currie & O'Sullivan's 2014 study highlighted a large proportion of male pornography actors groomed



(46%) or completely removed (35%) their pubic hair, compared with female actors who typically had no pubic hair (61%) or groomed pubic hair (30%).

SEXUAL BEHAVIOUR

Next, sexual behaviour. Not only can exposure to pornography influence one's perception of their own and others' appearance, it influences their expectations around appropriate and "normal" sexual behaviour.

Pornography shapes sexual practices, with research suggesting young people often try perform common sexual acts seen in dominant heteronormative pornography scenes. Facial ejaculation, sex with multiple partners and deep fellatio are now considered the "norm".

Pornography is also strongly associated with unsafe sexual health practices, including an obvious lack of condom use. A 2010 content



analysis of 45 randomly selected free pornographic videos from 15 popular (heterosexual) websites, found condom use was "virtually non-existent", used in only two per cent of scenes.

GENDER AND POWER IMBALANCE

And finally, and arguably the most concerning, is pornography's portrayal of gender and power. A 2015 analysis of 400 pornographic videos from the four most visited pornographic websites, found men were more likely to be depicted as dominant (39%) and women as submissive (43%). This was all while 88% of scenes contained some form of physical aggression. Even worse, 94% of the aggression was directed toward female performers. What message is this sending?

EDUCATION AS THE SOLUTION

So, where to from here?

Without guidance or education in how to properly navigate the space, we may be only seeing the beginning of the impact. Young people are rarely armed with the appropriate knowledge and information to critically analyse the explicit content they consume.

Education is critical to enable young people to understand the complexity and unrealistic nature of explicit imagery. The reality, however, is that pornography remains a taboo subject within schools and at home. It is up to teachers, parents and guardians – as a team – to start open conversations and talk about the elephant in the room. It is their duty of care to provide accurate information and be a source young people can trust.

If you're thinking right now, "not my child", well, I have some bad news.

NSPCC's recent research found 46% of minors first-time exposure to pornography was accidental. So, even for those who do not intentionally seek out this material, given the scope for accidental exposure, often as a result of pop-ups, dodgy links, cheeky siblings or friends in the school yard, education remains crucial.

To those thinking pornography is a "boys problem", think for a second about the impact of engaging in sexual activity with someone who has indeed been exposed to pornography and its unrealistic expectations. How are they to know what is real, and what is not?

Everyone needs to be armed with the information to not only critically analyse the media they intentionally or unintentionally consume, but more importantly, to stand up to misogynistic, unsafe sexual behaviour.

Young people's exposure to technology and explicit imagery is going nowhere. It's advancing at a scarily fast pace. Education in the area needs to get its act together if we are any chance of building a positive and healthy future for our incoming generations.

Are you ready to start the conversation?

Brandon Friedman

www.elephantd.com.au

A CREATIVE WAY TO SPEND THE SCHOOL HOLIDAYS

Be challenged, do what you love and expand your world.

WHEN MARSHALL McLUHAN wrote *The Medium is the Message* in 1967 about the dawn of the television age and its effect on society, he couldn't have dreamed where we'd be in the 21st century. In fact, in the 1980s no one could have imagined we'd have a device in our pocket that contained all of the knowledge in the world.

If you were born after 2000, you have never known a time without mobile phones. This may seem crazy, but people used to wait by the phone for a special call. Today, if a two-year-old is fussing in the supermarket, mum will hand over her phone and the toddler will instinctively know how to use it.

If you were born after 1995, you have never known a time without pay tv; and likewise, the new generation coming through will never know a time without streaming platforms like Netflix. The screen landscape was once television only; now it's phones, ipads, computers - with hardware like appleTV you can watch your computer screen on your television screen; and let's not forget VR, AR and games...

WHATS ON OFFER FOR TEENAGERS?

During the school holidays you can get a taste of what it's like to work in the entertainment industry. Maybe you've dreamed being a filmmaker since you were old enough to imagine? Perhaps you've never even considered it, not knowing where to start?

There are easily accessible courses in Sydney that can kickstart your dream. One of the most popular courses available is the **REAL FILMMAKING WORKSHOP**. You can start as early as Year 7.

This is a great way to learn all the aspects of filmmaking in a short time. Professional filmmakers will guide you as you take a script and learn how to direct actors; and get technical skills as well. If you've ever been itching to get your hands on a professional camera, here's your opportunity. You'll learn that every aspect of filmmaking plays an equal part. The script is as important, but no more so than say, lighting, which is a crucial storytelling device. You'll learn how to set the mood; maybe something scary, something funny, something sad - all will use vastly different lighting.

Sound is equally important. You'll learn how it guides the viewer's emotions; something you might have never really thought about. Professional filmmaking equipment is very expensive; but you'll have an opportunity to learn to use the best. As a cameraperson you'll learn about aperture, aspect ratio shooting, depth of field, exposure and so many other ways to change the image you're filming, in real time.

This is something everyone in the class will have a crack at. As a sound recordist, you'll hear through the headphones what sound is being picked up. You'll figure out what

audio levels you're recording and where the directional boom mike goes. It will amaze you the first time you hear it. When you shoot in a studio you'll find it's a much more controlled environment than a location.

This is all something your tutor will walk you through. As you take the reins of each production position (camera, sound, director, set designer, etc) you'll learn how each individual crew member becomes part of a whole. Being a director is like being the Captain of the Enterprise; you have to know how every crew position works, and have a feel for the actors as well. When you head into editing, you'll see how it all comes together.

It's the director's job to guide the editor, explaining which sound goes with what image, which image goes where. The script is a good guide of how the finished film will look, but you'd be really surprised how that can change in editing. You'll get a taste of that, too. There are several outcomes you can expect; each one unique and valuable in their own way. You may be able to find your passion. If you make your own films at home, you might have thought say, editing, was your love. But, once on set, it may become directing, or sound or any of the other crew positions.

You'll be challenged to work as a team; something you're probably not used to, if you are already making films at home. You'll work with your other crewmates (classmates); becoming a part of the whole production.

You'll learn to really listen to other people's point of view, take their suggestions onboard. You'll probably get really excited by the creative thoughts swirling around; prepare to be inspired.

Says 17-year-old Tran Vo, who goes to Birrong Girls High School, "When I started the **REAL FILMMAKING WORKSHOP** I felt nervous. When I met my cohorts, I felt even more nervous, because I could tell I was surrounded by talented individuals". Vo continues "I find it difficult to make friends straight away because I am very shy. Also, I came from a girls-only school and I wasn't used to being

around boys my age. Eventually my cohorts and my mentor and I got on really well, and we produced an amazing short film".

She felt she faced some doubt through the week because her knowledge was not as advanced as others, "but with the help of my mentor, along with my group supporting me, I was able to overcome all my challenges."

Probably the most important takeaway from this course, which will be powerful and valuable no matter where your journey takes you; collaboration.

WHAT IS COLLABORATION?

The dictionary will tell you it's "the action of working with someone to produce something". But in all screen and audio creative endeavours, it's the art of finding people you love to work with and continuing that journey and bond throughout your life.

Look at the credits for any famous Australian filmmakers like George Miller (*Mad Max*), Gillian Armstrong (*My Brilliant Career*, *Little Women*) or Jane Campion (*Oscar-winning The Piano* or *Top of the Lake*), you'll see they work with the same people all the time.

When you find a crew whose talents you respect and who "get you" and "get your vision", you'll hang on to them forever.

WHAT ELSE CAN I DO DURING THE SCHOOL HOLIDAYS?

Apart from the Real Filmmaking Workshop (grades 7-12), you can do an **HSC VIDEO INTENSIVE** (Grades 10-12). This workshop is specifically designed for your HSC project. As an emerging filmmaker you'll hone your screen skills to create a high-quality year 12 project. This course will further your knowledge of visual art, design, technology and drama.

In **WRITING A SHORT FILM** (Grades 9-12), you'll work with an experienced screen writer to learn the art of screen writing. You'll go from initial concept through to the development of your story. If you're interested

in creative writing, writing for the screen, or if you're developing screen content as part of your HSC studies, this is for you.

MUSIC FOR FILM AND TV (Grades 7-12).

Under the guidance of a professional music composer you'll use the state-of-the-art film and music facilities and you'll score your own short piece of film using a variety of software and techniques including a Digital Audio Workstation (DAW).

SPECIAL EFFECTS MAKEUP (Grades 8-11) is also available.

TV AND RADIO PRESENTING (Grades 7-10)

is a great way to build confidence in live presenting. Not only is it perfect for anyone dreaming of being a broadcaster, it's also a really great way to build confidence for its own sake. Shy ones take note, this will bring you out of your shell in a really fun, caring environment.

If you were inspired by *The Lego Movie*, **TEENS DIGI ANIMATION** is for you. You'll dive deeper into programs like Photoshop, After Effects, Adobe Animate. Blender and experiment with a green screen. 3D imaging is also explored here.

And of course, EDITING WITH PREMIERE PRO (Grades 7-12).

Editing is where the magic happens. This is where everything comes together. A good editor can make some average footage shine. Today there are so many editing tricks up your sleeve; you can go as experimental as you like; the sky's the limit with editing in 2020 and beyond. With a comfortable grounding in Premiere Pro, you'll be able to tackle anything request a director throws at you and be able to make suggestions of your own.

Learning these skills is the same as learning a new language; in fact, it is a new language, it's the language of filmmaking. Like any new language, you'll start off gently, and the more you practice your art, the more proficient you'll become. It may be a little challenging and confronting at first, but that will be just the first hour. You'll have fun while flexing

your creative muscle.

These courses may be a gateway to your possible future. But no pressure, the idea is to have fun and explore your world a little deeper.

HOW DO I KNOW THIS IS FOR ME?

If you're still reading, you're interested. You've probably been editing your own music videos since you were five. But you may be asking yourself "is it possible to make a career out of a hobby?" The answer is yes, yes and yes. As the old saying goes, "if you love what you do, you'll never work a day in your life".

WILL I FIT IN?

In a creative environment, people can be a little quirky. We celebrate that. You are in a safe space; it's a place where you can develop and grow and be your best self. There is no judgement here; you'll make friends and find collaborators; you'll share your views with other creative people. Creative types are often on the spectrum; that's what makes them creative. If you recognise yourself in any of the words, this may be the place you've been looking for all along.

There is always support staff here to help; new situations may be strange at first. You'll be encouraged to be whatever and whoever you want to be.

AFTRS

Australian Film Television and Radio School
aftrs.edu.au



Wellbeing



The Pilates Method:

A breath of fresh air to keep you moving for life.

**"CHANGE HAPPENS
THROUGH MOVEMENT
AND MOVEMENT HEALS."**

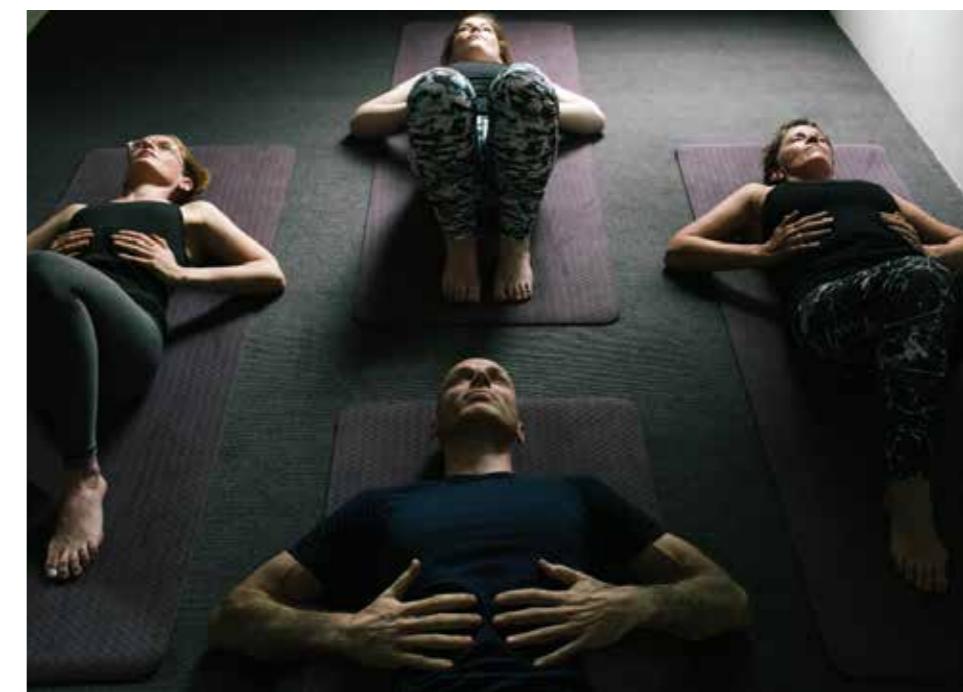
- J. H. Pilates

Joseph Pilates was a man well ahead of his time, promoting the physical and mental benefits of exercise and creating a body conditioning system called 'Contrology'. This involved a series of full body strengthening exercises, working each joint through its full range of movement with precision and control, focusing on a mind-body connection and the use of breath. It is what we now call the Pilates Method.

'Contrology develops the body uniformly, corrects wrong posture, restores physical vitality, invigorates the mind, and elevates the spirit.'

- J. H. Pilates

The benefits of exercise for mental health and well-being are well recognised with more and more people taking up 'mindful' exercises to assist with stress, anxiety and other mental health conditions. The benefits of exercise for mental health include improved memory and cognitive skills (thinking/focus), better sleep, development of coping strategies and resilience, distraction from negative thoughts and a sense of accomplishment.



'The mind when housed in a healthful body possesses a glorious sense of power.'

- J. H. Pilates

Beyond blue states exercise can be as effective as talking therapy and medication for treating mild-moderate depression. The Black Dog Institute reveals, just 1 hr of exercise per week, of any intensity can deliver significant protection against depression. The World Health Organisation recommends up to 150 mins per week of moderate physical activity for increased mental and physical health benefits. This may sound like an impossible task for many of us, especially those suffering a mental health condition, where just getting out of bed can seem hard enough.

This is where mindful exercise and starting with the basics, can be the first step to getting back on track to both physical and mental well-being. One benefit of the Pilates Method, is that movement can be broken down into its most simple and achievable form, then progressively built up to provide an intense physical workout. This allows almost everybody, the ability to participate in the Pilates Method in one form

or another, and to use it to get movement and exercise back in their life.

'Every moment of our life can be the beginning of great things.'

- J.H. Pilates

Many of us who practise the Pilates Method, work a set of guiding principles. Through the

analysis and understanding of these principles, it becomes even more evident as to why the Pilates Method can assist those with mental health issues, get moving for life. These guiding principles include Breath, Centring, Concentration, Control, Precision, Flow, Alignment and Commitment.

BREATH

We certainly can't live without it and through an increased focus we can gain even more benefits. The Pilates Method utilises various breathing techniques dependent upon the desired effect. Breath can be used in a calming manner to de-stress or used to invigorate and energise the body.

Cont on next page >

Stress and anxiety can lead to a build-up of tension in the muscles, as well as a stress hormone, cortisol. Over time, high cortisol levels have a negative impact on the body causing: weight gain, high blood pressure, disrupted sleep, reduced energy levels and a negative impact on mood. Deep breathing has a positive impact on cortisol levels, as well as assisting to relax the muscles and the mind. This is where most Pilates classes start, but it will then build in intensity where breath will be utilised to complement each exercise and maintain a sense of focused movement.

'Before any real benefit can be derived from physical activity, first one must learn how to breathe properly. Our very life depends on it.'

- J. H Pilates

CENTRING

Centring flows on from breath, providing a specific place to focus and direct your attention. Centring your mind provides an inner calm by drawing your attention away from the peripheral world and any negativity associated with it and redirecting it to the centre of your body. When physically centred, there is an equal balance of all muscles, working evenly with one another, providing a stable 'core' for movement without unnecessary tension and bracing. Centring your joints in their most optimal position creates freedom of movement, allowing you to move without unnecessary tension.

CONCENTRATION

Centring requires concentration, as does consciously focusing on your moving body when performing Pilates and other exercises. This focused concentration on movement allows the stress of the day to be left far behind. Concentration provides a distraction from any negative thoughts that may have been lingering. During your 10, 20, or 60 mins of Pilates, your mind and body can be free of stress, creating a better mindset to deal with the rest of your day. This is why Joe Pilates kept the repetitions of

each exercise to a minimum – only as many as the mind could stay focused on the exercise.

CONTROL

There may be many aspects of your life that you don't feel in control of, so use the Pilates Method to take control of your body and therefore your mind. Take control of how your body moves and therefore how it feels, and your mind is the conductor. You must be in full control of your whole body when executing each exercise with Precision.

PRECISION

Precision doesn't mean perfection! It's something to work towards and allows the body to become more proficient at each exercise. With proficiency, comes self-mastery and a deep sense of accomplishment. This builds self-esteem and self-worth and drives us to continually challenge ourselves even further. Success drives more success and success makes us feel good. Once precision and motor control are accomplished, the body doesn't forget and so Pilates becomes a place of familiarity, a safe & happy place to visit when life throws up its challenges. All you need is a space to lie down – no equipment necessary

FLOW

Flowing movement is often what our muscles and our joints crave. Motion is the lotion to free our muscles and joints from unwanted tension. Many clients describe themselves as feeling lighter and floating after a Pilates class, like a weight has shifted off their shoulders. Flowing from one exercise to the next to the next, also provides a mindful distraction. There is no time to think about any negative thoughts, as your mind is focused on what exercise is coming next and how to get from one position to the next, seamlessly. This is when you truly experience the pure joy of movement.

ALIGNMENT

Several studies have suggested poor posture may exacerbate the symptoms of clinical depression and anxiety. Patients with mild



to moderate depression felt more alert by keeping their back and shoulders upright while sitting and reported less anxiety (Wilkes et al., 2017), however slouched walking increased depression and decreased energy levels (Peper & Lin, 2012). This indicates the mind-body relationship is a two-way street and maintaining an upright posture can be a simple way to boost self-esteem. Good posture is also associated with better body image among people with depression (Canales et al., 2014).

The Pilates Method continuously works on the alignment of all joints to create a more optimal posture. There is a constant focus on balancing strength and mobility so we can sit, stand and move with ease and efficiency, combating the downward drag of gravity and the stresses of life. Through thoughtful movement we improve our body awareness, so we can self-correct when we are not in our most optimal body position. Lift your back & shoulders, to lift your mood.

COMMITMENT

Commitment is key to making a difference in your life. Start small and slowly build. What is achievable for you today? Perhaps just 3-5 mins of focused breathing to start (see Exercise – Progressive Balloon Breathing). Try adding 1-2 new exercises or 3-5 mins extra to your practise, each week – it's up to you. But make a commitment to practise each week, decide how many days you can manage and how many minutes or how many exercises. Make a commitment to YOURSELF and the practise of movement, to build a positive relationship between your mind, body and your spirit.

Exercise: Progressive Balloon Breathing

Set up – lying on your back, knees bent, feet on the floor or up on a bench/chair, hands on your stomach

Activity - Gently breath in through your nose and count how long your breath lasts. Gently breath out and make it last the same number of counts

On your next breath, try to make your breath in last 1 more count and your breath out last 1 more count. Continue to add 1 more count to each breath in and breath out. Repeat for 6-10 breaths.

So 1st breath lasts 5 slow counts, the next 6 counts, the next 7 counts and so on...

Imagine – your whole torso is a balloon. As you breath air in, you fill up like a balloon. As you breath air out, your torso deflates, just like a balloon. Each breath in stretches the balloon a little more and each breath out empties and deflates the balloon a little more – but with complete control and without developing tension anywhere. Continue to be gently with your breath.

Goals – relaxation, tension release, distraction, activation of deep postural muscles, improved breathing mechanics

—
Kath Banks
Aligned for Life Pilates

www_alignedforlife_com_au

Our mission is to get the Pilates Method into the hearts and minds of as many people possible, so they too can experience the full benefits it has to offer their mind, body and spirit.

Hula Hooping FOR MENTAL HEALTH

By Donna Sparx

With nearly one in three (32%) young Australians experiencing high levels of psychological distress, it is time to think outside the box... and inside the circle!

THE CLASSIC 50s kids' toy is making a comeback and it's for more reasons than you'd imagine. Hula hooping is helping people overcome anxiety, manage depression, increase confidence, develop a sense of patience and gentleness towards self, find an inner calm, and literally move through things. The bonus is that it's also a fun way to stay active and physically healthy too.

SO HOW AND WHY DOES IT WORK SO WELL?

Hula hooping connects an individual to what is known as the "flow" state. Psychologist Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi first wrote about flow in 1990. He describes flow as a state where you lose your sense of self and move on instinct. Some of the components of flow that he identified include:

1. Ability to concentrate for a sustained period of time
2. Feeling that the activity is intrinsically rewarding
3. Melding of action and consciousness

And, two key requirements for entering the flow state are goals and a balance between skills and

challenge. This is where hula hooping comes in.

Hula hooping provides an infinite supply of new moves, tricks and concepts to learn with more being developed all the time. In the past 5-10 years, hooping has taken off and become a global community of innovators, creators, community facilitators and performers. With the help of the internet, people are learning in their living rooms as well as in classes and schools and community centres.

Aside from the more obvious physical benefits of hooping, which include cardio, toning and neuro-plasticity, the psychological, emotional and spiritual benefits are fascinating.

A lot of which stems from the benefits of flow such as:

- Increased happiness
- Increased positivity
- Better coping skills
- Increased ability to manage stress
- Readiness to take on challenges
- Enhanced learning ability

AND HOW EXACTLY IS HULA HOOPING CONDUCIVE TO MENTAL HEALTH?

1. RELEASES HAPPY BRAIN CHEMICALS:



Like with most exercise, hooping releases endorphins. The main difference with hula hooping is that it seems to have a child-like joy associated with it. No other form of exercise seems to have the ability to make people seem as blissfully, people-think-you're-crazy, happy.



2. REDUCES STRESS AND ANXIETY

Hooping provides a healthy release for tension and pent-up feelings of anxiety by incorporating movement, breath, repetition and giving you something else to focus on.

3. INCREASES CONFIDENCE AND SELF-ESTEEM

With so many new things to learn, of varying difficulties, every hoop workshop or practise session results in doing something that had previously seemed impossible. This results in a sense of achievement that often gives people the confidence to set goals in other areas of their life.



4. MEDITATION THROUGH MOVEMENT

Like Tai Chi, hooping is a form of movement meditation. By combining a conscious awareness of breath and repeated sequences of movement, it creates a sense of calm and serenity after only 15 minutes of hooping.

5. CREATES PATTERNS OF JOY

Joy is a practise and regular hooping brings regular joy.

6. ENHANCES FOCUS

Most of us aren't born with an inbuilt ability to focus. It's something that takes practise and is something we need to train our brain to do.

7. MENTALLY AND PHYSICALLY STIMULATING

There's a fine balance between understanding mentally what is required for a hoop trick and then making your body do it. Hooping allows the brain and body to learn together.

8. KEEPS YOUR INNER SEAHORSE CONTENT

There's a funny little component of the brain called the hippocampus – from the Greek hippoc (horse) and kampos (sea monster). So, we literally have a seahorse in our brain! It's what brings together information from short-term memory to long-term memory and spatial navigation and it loves hula hooping for that very reason.

Hula hooping is a combination of exercise, play and flow. But beware, the happiness it spins up is contagious!

Author: Donna Sparx
www.hoopspark.com

The Latest Science Supports Intermittent Fasting and Low-Carb Diets for Weight Loss and Improved Metabolic Health

HUMANS EVOLVED hunting and eating their kill, that is fasting and then feasting. They did not eat breakfast, lunch and dinner and a few yummy snacks a day. The hormone insulin as well as the leptin and ghrelin (which control appetite and satiety) work more efficiently with a fast and feast cycle. The body was not designed to tolerate a constant input of processed, high carbohydrate food with little nutrient density.

In short, the “all calories are equal”, and “you just need to eat less and move more” approaches don’t work. That is because the calories in/calories out theory of weight loss is not supported by good science. Obesity and insulin resistance are hormonal issues. The quality and frequency of the food we eat has the biggest effect on insulin levels and thus our weight and metabolic health.

Why not the conventional low fat/low calorie method to lose weight?

Although low calorie diets can be effective to lose weight, many people put the weight back on again once they go off the diet, particularly if low calories diets have been done off and on many times over many years (the yo-yo effect). Continuous and/or prolonged restriction of calories can cause a lowering of the metabolic rate as the scientific analysis of the weight regain of the Biggest Loser contestants’ showed. And low fat diets are by nature, often high in sugar or carbohydrates and thus the low fat diet does not address the underlying hormonal cause of weight gain, persistently high insulin and in many cases, a degree of insulin resistance.

Intermittent Fasting with low carb eating is a healthy and extremely effective way to lose weight and keep it off. Contrary to diet myths, fasting will not lower your metabolism or compromise your concentration at work or energy levels when exercising (once you have adapted to it which can take a few weeks). Reducing your insulin levels and increasing your insulin sensitivity through fasting and low carb eating is the most efficient way to get you back to metabolic health. For more information on the scientific research visit fastaweigh.com/research

How to Fast

Clean fast for a minimum of 16 hours a day and try to increase to at least 18 hours by

week 2 or 3. Clean fasting means only water, sparkling water, black tea, black coffee and herbal tea. No milk, sugar or sweetener or flavoured waters or teas.

Most people find it easiest to start fasting after dinner (say 7pm) and then skip breakfast. If you eat lunch at 1pm, that is an 18 hour fast. Then eat dinner at 6pm, finished by 7pm and start the fasting clock again. The time you fast or eat can vary each day, you can change it up according to your schedule or when you are naturally the hungriest (we are all different!). Just make sure to hit your minimum continuous fast time each day. And remember, if you are not hungry when your fast time is up, don’t eat!

For faster weight loss results, increase fasting time as you get used to fasting. Try adding in at least one OMAD day a week (OMAD = One Meal A Day). On OMAD days, you fast at least 22 or 23 hours and you just have one large meal, most people prefer an early dinner but that is up to you.

Who Can Fast?

Healthy adults with no underlying medical conditions can safely fast. Humans have been fasting since the dawn of time, either because they were forced to by mother nature or for religious or spiritual reasons. Fasting has also been used therapeutically, both in ancient medicine practices and now today to treat specific metabolic ailments.



should consult and be monitored by their doctor before starting fasting and should regularly check in with their health professional.

Pregnant and lactating women and the elderly should not fast. People with a history of eating disorders should not fast either. Growing children and adolescents should not fast. People who are considered underweight should also not fast as they run the risk of malnutrition. These groups, however, can benefit from eating a low carbohydrate diet. This would mean eliminating sugary drinks, processed foods like lollies and chips and limiting the amount of grains in the diet. Instead the diet would contain lots of healthy meat and seafood with generous servings of above ground vegetables and healthy fats like those found in olive oil and avocados.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Liz O’Connell is a Nutritionist and the creator of FastaWeigh, a nutrition program that uses intermittent fasting and low carb eating to achieve metabolic health and weight loss. The goal of the FastaWeigh program is to lower insulin levels and, where necessary, reverse insulin resistance so that the body can achieve metabolic health and weight loss. Liz holds a Bachelor of Science (Nutrition) from Curtin University and a Graduate Certificate in Nutrition from Deakin University. Liz is also the co-owner of Bodyfit Pilates & Yoga in Gisborne, Victoria and runs group and private 8-week FastaWeigh programs at Bodyfit.

Liz O’Connell

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Mental Health and Basketball

By Brett Rainbow

How does playing basketball improve or enhance our mental health?

BEFORE putting this editorial together, I raised the topic with my mother who reminded me of a time when I was around 13 years old. We used to have a half-court basketball setup in our backyard at home and after school each day the first thing I would do, was go outside and put up some shots, however there was one particular day where I came inside and said something that Mum still remembers almost 30 years later.

"The best part of my day is when I get home from school and can spend time to myself outside shooting, it allows me to clear my mind of anything that is stressing me out and allows me to focus on myself for a short period of time each day."

Basketball provides a way for our physical health and mental health to correlate, providing a vital combination that impacts positively on our overall mental wellbeing.

THE COGNITIVE AND MENTAL HEALTH BENEFITS OF PLAYING BASKETBALL

Basketball is a sport where it's important to think quickly. It's a sport based around tactics and strategies.

On offense if you've got possession of the ball, the game is in your hands, you either pass the ball, shoot the ball, or you attempt to get past your defender. Another aspect of where it requires serious use of our cognitive skills is through executing tactics. If you're the Point Guard of the team you're likely going to have the decide on what play to run in order to beat the defense, allowing your team to score and ultimately win the game.

You must adjust through using memory and progressive thinking to change it up each time you're bringing the ball down the court. It's also vital you call plays that the rest of your team is aware of in order for them to play the game effectively and avoid confusion.

On defense, you must know where your opponent is at all times, while also knowing where the ball is, you must react to specific moves the offensive player makes, while also helping out your teammates when your opponent doesn't have possession of the ball. The opposition team is also likely to execute tactics of their own, and this is where you will



attempt to memorise what they're doing so the next time they run the same play you will be able to recognise what they're doing and get a defensive stop.

These components all require quick thinking and enhance our mental cognition and motor skills which help us in everyday life off the court as well. The benefit to working memory is also shown to be significant.

For someone who may be struggling with stress, anxiety or depression for the 45 minutes the basketball game is being played once you step across that white line all that matters is the game of basketball and what you can control on the court. It is believed that running for just 15 minutes can reduce the risk of major depression by over 25%.

SOCIAL AND MENTAL HEALTH BENEFITS OF BASKETBALL

As human beings one of our basic needs is to feel included and connected, connected to our community, family and friends. There is no better way to feel included and connected than being part of a team. With basketball being a team sport, the ultimate goal is team success and there is no greater feeling as an individual than contributing to a successful team. Your contribution may be 35 minutes, or it may be two minutes, it doesn't matter - everyone and every minute counts.

Basketball is a great way to stay connected with your friends outside of school and work, or if you're a student or you're thinking of playing for the first time it can be a great way to make friends. I know I've met a number of people over the years through the shared love of basketball from all kinds of backgrounds and religions.

Playing the game is a great way to optimise our social health while keeping in touch with our physical health needs and ensuring that we have the building blocks of a mentally healthy lifestyle.

PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH BENEFITS OF BASKETBALL

The physical nature of basketball requires players to be healthy, fit and injury free. It is well known that if we have a positive body image and outlook on our physical health that this will have a positive effect on our overall mental health.

Basketball is a sport that requires the coordinated use of every muscle in your body to effectively carry out the basic game skills of shooting, passing, dribbling, rebounding, defense etc.

Take for example, shooting the ball. Whilst the most obvious muscles that are used are in the arms, surprisingly most of the power actually comes from our legs. It is also vital that feet are set to the correct position, and that we bend our knees to get as much power as possible through the arms and into the shot.

Then there is the most obvious aspect of your fitness you're enhancing by playing basketball, and that is your aerobic fitness as basketball is a sport that requires a lot of running. It is believed a full court game of basketball can burn up to 747 calories in an hour, and up to 300 calories in 30 minutes from just shooting around by yourself or with friends.

It is believed that by increasing your heart rate several times a week, you may become more motivated as a person and benefit from increased levels of energy as a result of this. Basketball is a great way to tick those boxes and make it happen.

Basketball may also assist our mental health by improving sleep quality through increased physical exertion if you are playing regularly. Not getting enough quality sleep can be a risk factor for poor mental health, with many studies showing that those with insomnia or poor sleep are more likely to experience mental health conditions.

THE VITAL COMBINATION

The social and physical aspects of health that playing basketball can provide, as well as the cognitive and emotional aspects of health leads to individuals experiencing an enhanced mental health, making an individual stronger and mentally healthier in everyday life once they step off the court.

See you on the court!

—
Brett Rainbow

www.tsbasketball.com

The Journey to Manhood

By Tom Harkin

THE STATS

ON ANY GIVEN DAY in Australia 6 men will take their own lives*. A week from now, we will have lost 42 blokes around the country, and 580 men will have called an ambulance due to suicidal thoughts or attempts**. Beyond Blue's study of Australian men in their middle years tells the story of social connectedness for Aussie blokes aged 30-65. It paints a picture of dwindling social networks and a lack of emotional connection which are risk factors for the horrific male suicide stats which aren't improving***. The question is, why?

THE WELL TRODDEN AND PRECARIOUS JOURNEY TO MANHOOD

Think for a moment of what the typical boy grows up playing with, picture his toy box - stacked with cars, trucks, balls, guns and action figures. Little boys from early on are conditioned for action, to do things, fix things, shoot, fight, and maybe save the day with superhuman strength or superpowers. On the other hand, the generalised girl's toy box holds dolls and barbies, often used to role-play the

art of mastering relationships. Learning how to interact and dialogue.

This trend largely continues as we age. Boys aren't expected to or taught how to have meaningful face to face dialogue and interact at depth. We "do" things together but we're not great at "being" together. Imaging boys in the schoolyard conjures up guys creating games or sitting side by side, in constant movement. An entirely different picture plays out for girls, hanging out together and more often than not they're in circles or pairs facing towards each other and discussing life.

If we follow these well-worn paths to adulthood, we fulfil the myth that a man is an island. Sadly we'll lose our mates along the way, and because we played with the guns and trucks, we don't have the tools to make new mates as we go through different stages of our lives.

Boys are forced together through structured environments. We're placed together through primary and high school and organised sport and hobbies and then move onto university and maybe a social catch up every Friday and

Saturday night through our 20's. If you follow the massive generalisation of a hetero male, you end up seeing less of your mates as you enter into significant relationships around the late 20's early 30's.

Then potentially decide to commit to a mortgage and throw some kids into the mix. To support this, you take on more responsibility at work, put in longer hours and have even less time to foster your relationships.

Around the same time, your glorious new addition and your sociable other half, with her tools for creating new friendships, are signing up for mother's groups and adding yet another circle of lifelong friends. Due to lack of time, energy and skill most blokes end up living out weekends that revolve around their partner's social life and find themselves in awkward shallow chit chat with the partners of their newfound friends.

So sure this is a huge generalisation, but the unfortunate reality is our tool kit lacks the goods for maintaining well-oiled mateship or building new relationships when life shifts



and changes. When we walk through this narrative with grown men across the country they resonate strongly with this experience and lack of capability to change its course.

SO WHERE ARE THE TRAINING GROUNDS?

Young men often spend hours per week training and honing their skills on their chosen sport, which we actively support, often putting in hours ourselves as a free taxi service. They spend years training their intellect in classrooms across the country for a large majority of their childhood and are tested and measured on capability. So, why don't we encourage our young blokes to work their emotional muscle as hard and at times shed tears because they're trying to deal with? Because it's uncomfortable to see people cry? Or because on top of that, we've believed a myth that crying as men is a bad thing to be avoided and minimised at all costs? The thing is that men do cry but because it is not an accepted masculine trait they're doing it alone, in their bedrooms, at night when everyone is asleep, essentially on their own, which perpetuates the myth they don't do it.

We need to normalise crying for what it is, an emotional release, a catharsis, an incredibly healthy practice regardless of gender. Rather than going it alone men need to be comfortable to show their tears to the people who can support them without judgment. If we are to talk honestly with emotional connection, often tears are just part of the deal. If you learn to talk through the tears and not feel guilt and shame about them, it becomes easy to ride through the emotion and say what needs to be said.

This skill is incredibly powerful. Well practised emotional muscle that enables a man to talk when his heart has something to say and hold his tears well is not emasculating in any way, it

is a courageous and charismatic act. The stigma and inability to create aspirational emotional gyms is robbing this capability from our boys and men.

The lightness, laughter and connection of young men after they have had the opportunity to release emotion and talk without judgement is something I've witnessed over and over again. When we release emotion, we rise more often than sinking deeper. It is a release of weight and baggage, and it opens the same emotional pathways that when closed also blocks all of our positive emotions. The other thing that is liberating about it is taking on fear and surviving. Feeling the rush of confidence and a new perspective - if I can cry like that and be accepted, then I can remove the mask and show a bit more of myself.

Most men want to be accepted and the majority of blokes will say the acceptance they want most is that of their mates or the older men in their lives. Being cool or perceived to be cool is the pinnacle for most teenage boys because of its mass acceptance and admiration, its belonging. I met Adam Ferrier from the Gruen Transfer on the Triple M Man Study Project, and he mentioned that he wrote his thesis on 'cool'. That to be cool had a positive correlation with emotional regulation of having a poker face of sorts. From a place of cool, you give little that people can judge and sit in the safe territory of showing no emotion. But as life goes on, it becomes more of a trap than a dominant position because the cool person can become numb to their life experience and claustrophobic to the standard that has made them so popular in the first place.

A CALL TO ACTION

We need a new cool. A new aspirational role model of man that causes a tipping point for

mainstream masculinity. A man of range who has well defined masculine and feminine archetypal traits necessary for a full and healthy life. The full tool kit for all the jobs of life. To know today I need to be stoic and regulate my emotion to get through the adversity of the day but tomorrow when the coast is clear I need to shed some tears, drop some weight and allow myself, reach out and accept some support because we can't do life alone.

So what is our job then? We need to re-imagine the pathways from boy to man. We need to weave into all the stages of boyhood and manhood opportunities to train and build our emotional muscles. To be able talk with depth and about those things that carry weight, what I call talking with gravity. We need to learn how to sit face to face and hold space for each other as men. We need our fathers, coaches, uncles and teachers to exemplify riding the waves of emotion so that we don't fear our vulnerability and tears but come to understand the natural rhythms of sadness, grief, loss and struggle and how to ride them with our support crew for a long, healthy and shared life so that we naturally rise back to real joy, lightness and laughter, retaining these traits into our later years. Lets get upstream of these horrific stats and treat the root cause.

—
Tom Harkin
Tomorrow Man Founder and CEO

www.tomorrowman.com.au

Please contact the editor for a list of references

TEEN STYLING: SO MUCH MORE THAN MEETS THE EYE

It is unfortunate in today's society that we are often judged by what we wear, not who we are. Teenagers feel this intensely, as they struggle to self-identify, stand out, or indeed blend in with the crowd. Learning and understanding about their Personal Style, can be a real game changer for them and their self-confidence.

PERSONAL STYLING – WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?

The use of Personal Shopping and Styling Sessions has started to increase in popularity in our community, including sessions with teenagers. These are often the result of parents seeking new and perhaps more peaceful ways to help their teen find appropriate solutions to clothes shopping, without the emotional ordeal it can unfortunately often turn into.

The most common thing I hear from parents (and I have experienced this with my own teens), is that when it comes to choosing outfits or buying clothes, their teen doesn't want a bar of their advice. What do their parents know?! However that same teen is always happy to be guided by another adult...especially a stylist.

So how do we even begin to navigate the teen wardrobe? I recommend three essential steps:

1. WARDROBE ESSENTIALS

Wardrobe essentials or basics is the area to be focused on the most. These are the items which are crucial in helping to build a strong foundation in any wardrobe, and can be instrumental in creating multiple outfit options and combinations, simply by mixing and matching. These are often classic in style, and vary from well-tailored pants, good quality jeans, layers and jackets that can be worn throughout the seasons. I think of these as a canvas on which to add the paint.

2. SUSTAINABILITY

It's great to include an element of sustainability in the process of planning a wardrobe, especially when a teen or family budget is involved. This means focussing on the workhorse pieces in a wardrobe - key items worth investing in that will provide years of wear. As a stylist, I'm really excited to see sustainable fashion being embraced more than it used to. Our understanding of the advantages of spending a little more on the clothes which we wear the most, our signature items, is a really important message – especially to our teens.

This is the era of fast fashion, and it is important now more than ever to be educating our teens about the advantages of quality over quantity, and the ethical processes in fashion production and wear. Our choices can make a difference – by buying well, and wearing what we buy.

3. KNOWLEDGE

Knowledge and understanding of a few simple style elements is key to many issues. It is key to feeling confident and empowered by what we wear, it is key to being able to manage our wardrobe budget into the future and it is key to being a more sustainable fashion buyer.

Having the knowledge of how to put together outfits for different occasions instils confidence, which when learnt as a teen, can be drawn upon into their future. Job interviews, parties and special events can be dressed for well, without the 'I have nothing to wear' catchcry echoing through our homes.

Two fundamental style elements are colour balance and dressing for your body shape. Help in these areas can make an enormous difference to a teen's confidence, helping them to look and feel good about themselves. When we wear clothes that we feel good in, our confidence levels are much higher and often obvious to others around us. On the flipside when we wear clothes that are uncomfortable, ill-fitting or out of our comfort zone, we tend to feel less confident. This is why it is so important to have a fundamental understanding of our personal style.

DOUBLE THE PRESSURE – PEER PRESSURE AND SOCIAL MEDIA

Social Media adds a new level of complication to teen fashion and style. Selfies in new clothes are thought critical by many teens, and comparisons are all too easy to draw on.

I was recently invited to give a presentation on sustainable fashion to Year 9 girls at a local college. Not surprisingly, there was ample discussion around social media and the pressure girls feel to always be wearing something different or new. When I asked the girls what their solution would be to address this issue, some of them suggested wonderful ideas like clothes swapping with friends or getting creative with what they had in their wardrobes. However the vast majority declared they would simply go shopping; it wasn't a big deal for them to buy something new on a regular basis from a cheap store and just wear it once. Surprisingly, this was during the discussion on sustainable fashion and looking at ways in which we can reduce waste in the fashion industry! There needs to be a lot more focus on educating our teens about sustainable fashion.

FINDING OUR PERSONAL STYLE

Our clothes say a lot about us and are often an extension of our personality, which is what makes our style unique and individual to us. Teens are still navigating their style, which is why fashion advice from an adult friend, teacher or indeed a Personal Stylist can be so helpful.

Personal style is a reflection of personality, lifestyle and how we want the world to perceive us. Even more importantly though, it is about how we wish to feel on the inside. Supporting our teens to make shopping decisions centred around wardrobe essentials, sustainability and personal style knowledge will help support their choices, their budget and last but not least, their confidence.

Stephanie Vaughan

www.infinitestyling.com.au

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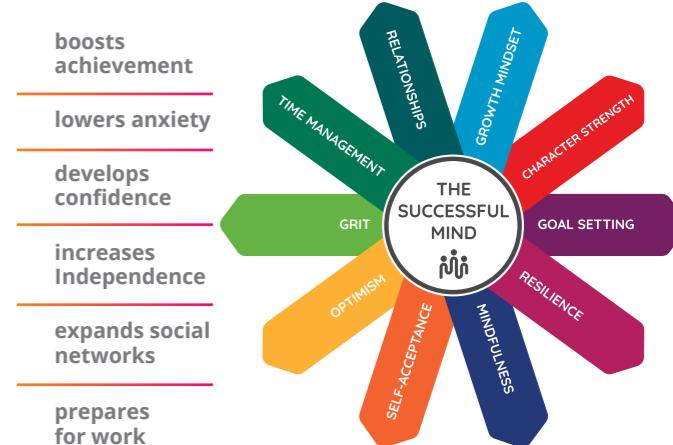


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Posture in children

Debate surrounding the importance of spinal posture and whether it contributes to back pain and reduced quality of life.

The impact of technology on spinal posture has recently been hotly debated within certain spheres of the medical profession.

A sample of Australian high school children appear to NOT adhere to recommended ergonomic guidelines

With the increasing adoption of technology in school aged children, there is little information on the adoption of ergonomic principles by school children in the home.

We conducted a pilot study evaluating reported adoption of ergonomic principles in 300 year 10, 11 and 12 private high school students from the Eastern Suburbs of Sydney. Back pain was reported by 69% of the respondents and 25% of these students reported taking medication for their back pain.



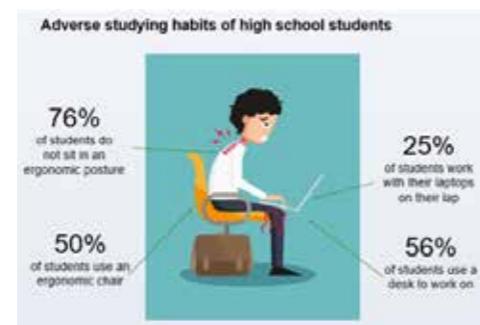
We found that there appears to be little evidence that our sample population of high school students were adopting best practice ergonomic principles with many of the students

NEVER using ergonomic aids such as an external mouse, keyboard and footstool.

Additionally, a significant number of students reported adopting apparent adverse postural positions such as working for prolonged periods with their laptop computers on their lap.

This may entail the provision and utilisation of an ergonomic chair, external keyboard, mouse, monitor and footstool.

Further research is needed to determine the long term effects of these poor ergonomic postures in Australian High School Students.



Scoliosis is a 3 dimensional deformity of the spine and should be screened for in early adolescence.

SETTING UP YOUR WORKSTATION:

A GUIDE

Learn how to set-up your desk correctly!

Follow these guidelines to reduce back and neck pain.



Tips to sit comfortably and maintain concentration:

1. Sit as far back as possible into your chair. You want to be able to feel the benefit of the chair's lower back support.
2. Raise your chair until your elbows are slightly higher than your keyboard.
3. If your feet don't easily reach the floor, use a foot rest or some books under your feet.
4. The top-most line of monitor display should be at eye level.
5. Your screen should be a comfortable viewing distance from your body.
6. Keep your keyboard and mouse in close proximity.
7. Keep your elbows close to your body, with your shoulders relaxed down.
8. If your chair armrests interfere with your desk set-up, remove them.

Remember: If you use a laptop, invest in a separate keyboard and mouse to set-up correctly for optimum ergonomic comfort.

Current guidelines suggest that high school children, especially in the latter years of schooling with increasing time spent with technology adopt good ergonomic principles.

Although the adoption of good ergonomic principles and timely spinal posture assessment is warranted they should be adopted within a wider framework of healthy lifestyle practices. These practices include regular formal and informal exercise, a healthy diet and appropriate exposure to screens.

Larry Cohen

B.Sc (Physiotherapy), M.Sc(MED) PPCR,
PhD candidate (Sydney University),
Certified Schroth, SEAS & Egoscue
Postural therapist

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Fitness



THE TRUTH ABOUT BULLYING IN AUSTRALIA AND WHAT WE CAN DO ABOUT IT!

Bullying is defined as an ongoing misuse of power in relationships through repeated verbal, physical or social behaviour that causes physical or psychological harm.

Bullying is an issue that affects the entire community and has become a topical issue and cause for concern. Queensland is taking a proactive stance against bullying (as are other states) and leading the way with a number of key actions, such as putting the issue on the national agenda, holding a National Day of Action against Bullying and Violence, appointing a Queensland Anti-Bullying Taskforce, as well as schools adopting a zero tolerance to bullying.

The statistics show that 1 in 4 kids are currently being bullied in Australian Schools and 3 out of 4 kids have witnessed it being done to someone at their school at one time or another.

According to the Bureau of Statistics annual report (2017) there are 3,849,225 school kids in Australia. Based on the bullying statistics this means that there are currently 962,306 kids being bullied in schools today. As the number of children attending school increases year on year, the problem will continue to grow.

THE BENEFITS OF BULLYING PREVENTION PROGRAMS

The Children – Studies have shown that

children engaged in traditional martial arts training showed higher gains in executive function compared to standard physical education, show less aggression and anxiety, as well as improved social ability and self-esteem, leading to overall improved wellbeing.

The Parents – Can rest in the knowledge that their kids will have a much better chance of knowing what to do in a stressful situation and if they are having problems they will be more likely to talk about it and ask for help.

The Schools – In alignment with the National Safe Schools Framework, this program will support the principles and practices required to promote safe and supportive schools.

As a result of this program, students in the school will demonstrate more positive behaviour management, higher levels of engagement and reduce the incidence of aggressive or anti-social behaviour. They will demonstrate a higher level of focus, listening skills and leadership qualities.

The Mentors – Sharing the core values and skills of personal self-defence training to empower kids from all over Australia to overcome bullying. We assist the school network and raise the profile of the entire martial art industry as a most valuable tool to help with this enormous problem.

appropriate principles and encouraging positive behaviour in children they will contribute to a healthier and safer community.

Our Number #1 objective should be to provide a training solution in every school that is available to every student to educate them on how to handle conflict situations and understand that bullying can have a serious consequence to the well-being of a human being.

Training educates students on creating a culture and understanding around bullying that will radically reduce the toll it is taking on our children, community and our nation!

The best way to achieve this is to provide a course and mentoring program in every school to mentor the youth of today and provide them with empowering solutions to handle modern day issues.

Martial Arts Programs focus on teaching all students Self-Discipline, Respect and Integrity and those children experiencing bullying Confidence, Resilience and Courage.

—
Frank Mechler
Amyda Martial Arts

www.amayda.com.au

CLIFFHANGER CLIMBING GYM



THE CLIMBING FEVER STARTED SLOWLY.

It was a few sessions here and there, mostly me battling fear of the height more than any physical challenge, until one day I was on the wall of the local climbing gym, breathing heavily and facing an outcrop from its underside - an outcrop that had defied me for weeks. Suddenly, I wanted it more than ever. For the first time, the sense of desire to achieve a move overrode my awareness of the distance to the floor. I wanted this move, I fought for it, and I moved in a way that suddenly wasn't afraid of falling. I reached, grabbed. It was more a dramatic scramble than elegant climbing,

but it was the first time I felt the fight to battle the wall. A determined drive with my foot and suddenly I did it, I mounted the outcrop, awash with a feeling of achievement that was intense enough to taste. I was ecstatic.

On the ground, I couldn't hide my delight. I remember talking to a guy who was excited about his own climbing 'project' - and what he'd achieved. He was happy, almost ecstatic too. Suspiciously, I looked past him. Behind him were people, some roped in, some climbing, some talking. Everyone carried the same restless, happy energy. They couldn't hide their smiles.

The climbing was doing something, something that other sports didn't do, I was sure of it. Twenty years later, I've never been surer of it - climbing is an anti-depressant, the best one I've found.

At a chemical level, exercise releases serotonin, dopamine and endorphins - although how endorphins specifically play out in mood after exercise is still up for debate. Studies have consistently found regular aerobic exercise is an effective treatment against depression, and more studies are revealing that supports non-aerobic exercise and resistance training, are also beneficial against depression, although what components are needed at any given time to have an anti-depressant affect is still not clear.

Now, climbing is coming under scrutiny for

having particularly beneficial effects, however the resulting studies mostly involve bouldering as opposed to route climbing, probably because the shorter duration and accessibility for novices who don't belay, makes it easier to study. The studies almost invariably find bouldering improves mood. However, anecdotally, after 20 years of climbing and bouldering, my experience suggests climbing has additional benefits to bouldering with regard to mood and is worth studying in its own right.

Less than a year after I'd taken up climbing, just after scaling the outcrop in the gym, I found myself on a climbing trip on the coast in Thailand. I was scaling a cliff, with difficulty; I was still not always comfortable with height, the mind game was constant. I fought for the moves, and finally rose above the tree line.

The view before me changed. I was above the first line of trees of the jungle, and now I was looking across the beach and ocean, out onto island outcrops of rock. Near me, a troupe of macaque monkeys, annoyed at my presence, made aggressive noises but luckily didn't back them up. The joy was back - but for vastly different reasons: the view.

It's one of the things that makes climbing so great, this massive variety of experiences and emotions. You've got fear - but then it's replaced with huge payoff if you can push past it, plus an incredible view,

one that's not always obvious until the moment you succeed in defeating the climb.

But there is also the social aspect; you work

in pairs, building a technical skill base with each climb, and building your community of climbing partners. Becoming a good belayer, and really being able to ensure the safety of another human being, is more rewarding and maturing than perhaps even the climbing itself.

Then there's the climb - a physical problem put before you, one that forces you to devise a plan and create a physical solution. Anyone able to calm their breathing, will in turn calm the heart rate, and in turn calm their mind, which will allow for better problem solving. Then, at the time you are climbing, you are immersed in the bigger picture - your immediate well being - which puts all other aspects of existence into the pale. Everything is tuned out in favour of the climbing. It forces you to live in the moment.

— Michelle Coleman

www.cliffhanger.com.au

HEALTHY ~~TOXIC~~ MASCULINITY

For young blokes around Australia that are treading a path to manhood based on an outdated masculine stereotype it can be a confusing time.

Tomorrow Man run programs with teenage boys, parents, teachers, sporting clubs, blue/white collar workers and whole communities. We create training grounds for boys and men to practice the art of conversation, build emotional muscle, and develop a skill set that equips them to handle what life throws at them in a healthy way.

Join us in creating a better tomorrow for everyone by helping blokes reinvent a healthier version of masculinity to live by. Get in touch today.



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OutThere Sailing

Sailing is a sport that is accessible for everybody, all equipment is provided by clubs so all you need to do is show up and have a good time!

Clubs will utilise a wide variety of activities within the program that may include Keelboats, Dinghies, Stand Up Paddle Boards, Windsurfers and Powerboat adventures; All OutThere Sailing programs are delivered by qualified Australian Sailing Instructors.

OutThere Sailing provides a social environment where teenagers are able to cultivate real friendships with others from their local area, whilst potentially igniting a love for sailing in the process. Socialisation and fun both on and off the water are paramount; club culture is inclusive of everyone and there is plenty for parents and teenagers to get involved with.

This program offers a variety of exciting on-water activities for novices including windsurfing, paddle boarding, sailing in the Hobie Wave catamarans, pacer dinghies and Elliot 7 Keelboats. This program is aimed at youth aged 12 to 17 years old.

The incredible variety of activities on offer has seen an increase in youth participation at the club as it caters to all talents and strengths of those participating. We are already witnessing the benefits of the youth spending time on the water and outdoors with their peers, offering alternate activities for this age group.

Mission Australia, adopted the OutThere program as part of their approach to increase prosocial behaviours and engage in activities that enhance health and wellbeing for their 'Youth on Track' program. The youth involved have built trusting relationships with the club instructors, in turn allowing them to develop awareness and understanding of the water whilst empowering them to develop leadership skills, make choices and broaden their opportunities.

Giving youth the opportunity to engage in on water activities is a great way to further develop their team building and communication skills whilst fostering their social development, health and wellness all in a beautiful, fun and relaxed setting.

The combination of the activities on offer is conducive to creating an environment for youth to feel at ease, supported and removes any



external social pressures. Sailing by nature is a fun, social and skill-building activity that all can partake in and offers a platform for all abilities to get involved, which in turn contributes to fostering positive mental health.

We hope to see you *OutThere*.

—
Brendan Rourke
Royal Prince Alfred Yacht Club

www.rpayc.com.au



OutThere Sailing is an Australian Sailing program aimed at getting 12-17 year olds active on the water. Qualified Australian Sailing Instructors provide participants with the knowledge needed to get out and have fun with their friends safely from the very first session.



RAMP FEST

I'VE BEEN RIDING BMX for 21 years now – well more than half my life. And in that time, I've had many amazing experiences and met many incredible people thanks to a simply riding my bike. For me, BMX started as riding up and down my street – and for many of my friends today, it started much the same. We bonded over the shared love of the freedom, challenge, risk and joy that comes from riding a little kid's bike.

ENERGY OVERLOAD!

I've always been a ball of energy and all that energy needs to go somewhere. Even now, while writing this article, it is difficult to sit still for long enough to write more than a paragraph. BMX riding is physically demanding, but never feels like "training" or exercise - I found comfort and peace when riding my BMX as it helped to burn off my energy excesses. The bonus from that is developing much better sleep habits whereas I'm now able to fall asleep at the drop of a hat.

FOCUS

This follows on from my whole "excess energy" thing, but holding focus on a task at hand used to be a big problem for me - this, coupled with a thick disdain for rules – has lead to many battles throughout my life. The demanding nature of freestyle BMX has somewhat forced me to concentrate with more attention to detail than anything else. I was able to learn how to apply this focus to other aspects of my life. Even though this mostly happened once I'd left school,

I don't think it needs to be action sports... The level of focus, now that I ensure I don't overload on built up vigor, is that which I only dreamed of.

ANGER MANAGEMENT

I heard somewhere that anger is one of the strongest emotions we experience and if we can begin to understand it and harness its power, we can achieve much more than we imagine. Action sports need a certain level of strength and power so tapping into the anger within, our abilities are amplified, and we find strength we didn't know existed.

DEPRESSION AND ANXIETY

So this is a big one. I let depression and anxiety have control over my life for way too long. I was told not to over think things which was fantastic advice because negativity was all I knew. With BMX clearing my mind, I began to pull apart everything that had happened in the last little while from a few hours to a few days.

Objectively looking at things from many angles was much simpler once I'd been for a ride and the normal negative, stressed approach was almost non-existent. The only way I'd improve on this was to ride my bicycle the entire way home and do my thinking then.

I want to be clear with this though, once I started thinking this way, I must ensure my thoughts weren't negative in any way. They needed to be argumentative and challenge each other in order to break them down and get to the bottom of them. It took some time to retrain my negative processing but BMX was instrumental in sorting this out.

I don't think it needs to be action sports...

Early on it was the creative freedom from freestyle BMX and many action sports that

helped me the most. Not only was it building physical strength but also mental toughness. Learning new skills and managing myself when failure seemed to be my only option showed me how to be much more resilient to mental health battles I was fighting and was integrating much better with those around me.

But as I'm learning these days I think the key is just being active. When I stopped driving a car and I began riding my bicycle everywhere, I found a similar peace. I was no longer going to extremes to fulfil energy quotas or pushing the limits of my every moment, I was merely riding home from work. It became a meditation and some of my deepest thoughts were made clear during these rides. With my blood flowing freely around my body I could focus on very clear thought processes and see from more and more angles and points of view.

WHAT YOU CAN TAKE FROM THIS.

There's so much I could say and a plethora of anecdotes I could fall upon to describe how BMX and other action sports help manage all sorts of mental health snags. But I think the big take away from this small article is to get up and get active. Be passionate about the search for something you enjoy and try to take note of how you feel after each time you raise a sweat and also when you learn something new. I think you'll be surprised at the difference.

— Stephen Taylor –Madin for Chris Bierton

www.rampfest.com.au



Pole Fitness

By Sarah Thompson

WE ARE LIVING IN INCREASINGLY UNCERTAIN DAYS.

We are being confronted by the effects of global warming on a daily basis, and climate anxiety is now a recognized psychological state, particularly affecting the younger generation who have more of their future ahead of them. We all need strategies to build emotional resilience and to be able to support each other. More than ever, maintaining our mental health and a balance perspective is essential. Many are yearning for a strong sense of community and acceptance that somehow became scattered in recent years. And now more than ever, people are turning to an unlikely place to find it... their local pole studio.

While it may seem a little unconventional, pole dancing has a unique and powerful way of helping people to restore their confidence and reinforce their body acceptance, all while building incredible physical strength. The pole community is made up of people from all walks of life: from the gender non-conforming to the stay-at-home mom, from those battling eating disorders to those overcoming addiction, and across all ages.

Pole dancing has had a chequered history, initially evolving hundreds of years ago as a traditional sport in Chinese and Indian cultures, and much more recently associated with exotic entertainment in western cultures which has hindered its acceptance as a mainstream form of exercise. However, Australia has always been a world leader of the sport, and in 2019 Australian audiences voted mother of 3, Kristy

Sellars, as the national winner of Australia's Got Talent. Check out her powerful performance inspired by escape from domestic violence here. As more people are becoming aware of the powerful positive effects that participating in this activity can provide, the number of locations offering it has dramatically increased. According to Dr Joanna Nicholas, an Australian scientist who has extensively researched the physical and mental benefits of pole fitness, there were just four studios in 2004 in Australia growing to at least 118 in 2018

She observed that it was interesting to see that for those who did choose it as a form of exercise there was a long term loyalty to the activity. The negative judgement from outsiders seems to strengthen the bond of those within the pole dancing community and when people do start classes they form strong bonds with fellow participants that helps them continue their pole dancing journey.

She explains that pole classes facilitate an environment in which there is a strong sense of inclusion and acceptance, including body appreciation. One huge benefit that she has noted from her research is that it is great for increasing self-esteem, confidence and a healthy body image. Pole fitness involves a combination of resistance training, a cardio workout as well as improving flexibility.

Exercise can help boost mood, manage stress and improve sleep. But when you're feeling down, exercise is the last thing you feel like doing. If you're being held back because you don't believe you're in some way good enough to pole dance, you're letting societal messages



dictate how you live your life. Choosing to try something that interests you, despite the stories you've been told about why you shouldn't or can't, is a way to truly live your life for yourself. There are many role models who have been told they couldn't do something, but decided they could anyway. You probably saw J. Lo include some pole dancing in her epic Super Bowl show last week with Shakira. She's 50 and has only started pole dancing for a year or less – and look at her! Watch it here. Despite the inevitable critics she wanted to prove that women of any age can live the life they choose. You can be your own role model, and do something that you want to do, despite all the reasons you've been told you can't (and all the reasons you're telling yourself too!).

Movement is the opposite of being stuck. When we're sad, depressed, anxious, and feeling stuck, our bodies manifest those emotions. Our bodies become tense, tight, and our breath becomes shallow. Movement becomes much more difficult, or can even stop. Pole classes provide a supportive space to move all parts of your body. Dance in general allows you to move your body in different directions and planes, so you're using a wider range of muscles than a conventional gym workout.

The more we move our bodies, the more we can move out of our rut; our depression; our anxiety. Movement is actually a tool or resource we can use to get un-stuck; to create space for energy and emotions to flow. We can move from a place of tension and tightness, to embodying feelings of joy, strength, and hope.

During that time we have seen literally

thousands of women discover how much they CAN DO and acquire a new found appreciation for their bodies. Pole fitness classes are non-competitive and taught in a highly supportive environment, each person can progress at their own pace guided by our expert and very experienced instructors.

Teen Pole Fitness classes have been running with a specific focus on improving strength, body awareness all in a progressive curriculum. The classes are well supported by active teens who have become quite addicted to the sport – it's become the highlight of their week. There are no fitness or dance pre-requisites to get started. Pole dancing classes are a chance to enjoy your body as you are right now.

If after reading this, you still don't think pole dancing is for you, that's ok! Finding what your vehicle is a journey you need to make. It is important to know that embracing yourself, in your entirety, as you are so far and right now, is vital to your well-being and quality of life. I highly recommend going on a journey to find what can become your practice, to regularly connect with your body and all parts of yourself, and to let those parts of you shine and empower you.

Sarah Thompson

www.missfit.com.au

www.kidsaerialsacademy.com.au



ROCK CLIMBING IN THE OUTDOORS

By Richard Lodge

ROCK CLIMBING as an activity has been around since someone saw a cliff and wondered if they could climb up it. It is now practised throughout the world and will be in the Tokyo 2020 Olympics.

Rock climbing can be pursued many ways outdoors, but most people these days will go out with a guide and pursue top rope climbing. This means that the rope will be anchored at the top of the cliff through an anchor point and the rope will always be above you as you climbing up the cliff, you are always safe and won't fall far if you do let go.

This is a great way for people to get out and experience climbing in a very safe way, but still get to feel the excitement and thrill of trying an physical activity in an exposed position. Once you have spent some time learning these skills, it is on to lead climbing. Lead climbing consists of heading up the cliff tied into the rope, but clipping it into protection points on the cliff on your way up, if you fall off, these will stop you falling to the ground, but you will fall a ways before you stop, this depends on how far apart the clips are. This adds to the difficulty of the climb as well as the challenge of the climb. Doing moves knowing that you are facing a large fall can be both a huge thrill, or can completely stop you in your tracks.

This leads to one of the most satisfying and challenging aspects of climbing, it is the aspect of risk. Even with top roping, the risk and danger or the apparent risk, can make even the easiest moves, seem quite difficult. Just imagine stepping over a gap in the floor, pretty easy, you could do it all day with your eyes closed. Now do the same move on top of a large cliff, for most people this same action would be very difficult, even though the risk of falling is tiny.

They help check all your safety gear, as you do for them as well and they are always there at the end of the rope with encouraging words or screams to help get you up the cliff.

Without them to help you celebrate the wins, or commiserate the failures, climbing would be a whole lot less than it is. That I have met through climbing, in no small part because they literally have your life in their hands when you are climbing, that is an amazing amount of trust and responsibility that doesn't happen in any other sports.

Just being outdoors is great for the mind, the places that climbing takes you are amazing. Rock Climbing has given me so much over the last 28 years, lifelong friends throughout the world. The language of climbing transcends language and I have discussed climbing and areas with people who I don't share a language with and now have a network everywhere.

Rock climbing challenges one physically and mentally. I have climbs that I will go back to for the rest of my life, for the challenge of completing, or just the sheer joy of moving over the rock. It has also been the place that I can escape from the world, grab a rope, some climbing shoes and a mate and just get out there into the outdoors. I always know that the rock will be there for me and it is a place that I can feel an amazing sense of calm and satisfaction, it is something that anybody can access at any level and whatever level that they are climbing at, get the same satisfaction. I have seen the look on peoples faces as they complete their first climb and recognise the look on their face, because it is still, after 28 years, the same one that I have on my face when I get down from a climb.

—
Richard Lodge

www.rockadventures.com.au

Climbing is very similar, it is a very safe endeavour, the main reason I have climbed for so long without any accidents and one of the best parts of climbing, is your partner. Climbing is a solo pursuit, it is just you and the rock. You need to work out the way to get up the cliff using the cracks and fissures in the rock and you need to put in the effort to reap the reward of standing at the top, but without your partner holding your rope, then you would not be able to get anywhere, well not in a safe manner anyway.



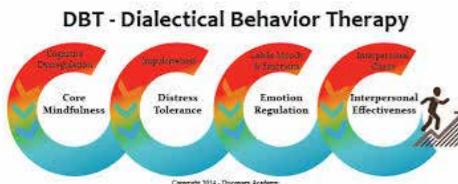
DBT Therapy

By Lindy Chaleyer

Do you remember what your teenage years were like? Were they turbulent but fun? Chaotic but busy? Romantic but emotional? Exciting but at the same time terrifying?

Many of these emotions seem to emerge during our adolescent years when we are trying to understand how and where we fit into our world and what will we do with our lives. How prepared were we for managing the rollercoaster ride of the teen and early twenty years? I'd hazard a guess that not many of us were prepared and ready!

If this reminds you of your teenage years wouldn't it have been helpful if you had learnt skills to regulate your emotions enabling you to navigate life more clearly and with less self-doubt. To be able to reach the goals and aspirations that had been but a dream during our high school years.



Dialectical Behavioural Therapy (DBT), created by Marsha Linehan, is a skills-based therapy to help people experiencing extreme or unstable emotions to better cope in their daily lives. DBT philosophy makes it possible to embrace competing ideas simultaneously including the core of the dialectical balance of acceptance and change. This can be challenging for adults let alone young people still learning how to navigate their way in the world.

DBT uses mindfulness and a variety of skills to learn how to regulate these emotions and to learn how to understand and navigate problems that arise in our daily lives. Clients learn distress

tolerance and emotional regulation and how to apply interpersonal skills in challenging situations and work towards a desired outcome peacefully and collaboratively.

Young people, people in their twenties and older years can benefit from identifying the reasons that cause emotional dysregulation. Through skills-based training with their DBT-informed therapist they can learn to select healthy coping mechanisms to manage these difficult emotions. Furthermore, what DBT offers is the freedom to choose actions leading to a desired result and to identify the necessary skills required to do so.

DBT takes the form of individual and/or group therapy. The DBT-informed therapist works closely with her client using worksheets, diaries and mindfulness skills to promote practical ways to enhance the client's ability to enjoy what life has to offer. It is a flexible process allowing the therapist and client to work on what needs to be addressed now while building the client's emotional capacity.



have my genuine support and encouragement every step of the way. As a result I have had the pleasure of seeing many clients achieve significant change and create the lives they wish to live."

Lindy Chaleyer

city2coastcounselling.com.au

DBT is a therapy that requires tenacity and a desire for change. A useful DBT skill such as "Wise Mind" teaches how to experience reason and emotion simultaneously. Understanding the synthesis between thinking and feeling and consciously choosing the way forward confident in a positive and desired outcome. DBT often serves to provide hope for change without feeling "broken". DBT accepts clients are doing the best they can but helps them to do better.

"I have found DBT to be a great way to work with clients who want to bring about everlasting change. I work together with my clients to develop skills that are designed to manage everyday stressors, to work on acceptance and change, and to help rebuild difficult interpersonal relationships and to retain them. Whilst it does call for a strong commitment and desire for change within each client, they



Virtual Reality

By Karyna Brown

games, action adventure, music and activities.

- But of course with all good things moderation is essential and should not be taken lightly.

—
Karyna Brown
GameLobby Pty. Ltd.

www.gamelobby.vone

Virtual reality gaming has opened up a completely different form of therapy through complete immersion gameplay.

- It gives you the ability to leave the world behind & venture into a completely new one in the safety of their own home or in Activity centres specialising in the exciting new technology.
- Gaming stimulates the senses and emotions that are not usually explored through lack of opportunity, medical limitations or personal limitations.
- Virtual reality experiences are not just for the gamers they are for everyone. With relaxing walkthroughs, spectacular cinematics, explorers and observers.
- Educational opportunities through simulated on the job training, travel through prehistory, Laboratory testing, robotics.
- Virtual reality gives a highly active aspect to the video game industry with fun fitness



That's Gay

By Nez Erok

I THINK I may be lesbian, gay, bi, trans... I don't even know? What gender do I like? Who am I? I'm confused about so much? What if I told you that it doesn't even matter! So what that you may be trying to work it out!? You're going to be more than okay!

I mean, do straight people have to come out to the world with fear and judgement of being rejected? Questions like "what will mum and dad and the family think?" "My friend's might judge me"? "It's against my religion, my culture, why am I like this"? "Why am I not normal"?

What is normal?

What if your norm was what felt right for you and that was your truth? What if you just liked and were attracted to the same gender, or both genders? What if gender didn't even matter and it was all about the energy and the attraction that you felt for another person? Wouldn't that be something!

I want you to get to a place where you can still be all of yourself? I want you to be totally okay with whatever your sexual preference is. Okay with whichever gender you may be attracted to. What if I said to you that its okay any which way you that you are? Even if you're confused! What if I said for you to remove the "label" of bi, gay, trans, and just be who you are without categorising yourself even?!

I know that everyone already struggles with sometimes feeling a bit different, a bit unsure of who they are just yet – trust me I'm a grown adult and this is true for us too! You can have these mixed feelings and concerns when you first try on a new way of being – a truer way of

identifying with yourself. These feelings can range from excitement, to worry, to grief and fear. It's all going to be okay though with the right support and understanding of yourself. Most of all its going to be okay just by you accepting yourself and being kind and gentle with yourself. Truth!

Sometimes it's not all rainbows and unicorns for youth in the LGBTQI community. I get it! I mean, it's not even like that for adults. Identifying with the LGBTQI community can be a very important milestone for youth in high schools. It's important to be resilient, and its important to be yourself no matter how much judgement you feel you might face, from yourself or others. Rise above it, turn that fear into courage and just be you, beautiful you.

Here are some things that you can do to help with homophobia:

- Speak up against homophobia, transphobia, and anti LGBTQI harassment and discrimination. Find that beautiful voice inside you and become a voice for yourself and others. Speak your truth!

- Be accepting and supporting of anyone of your friends or anyone in your circle who decides to "come out". Understand that this could be difficult for them. For some it's even more difficult than for others. Be there for your mates please! Check in with them to see if they are okay regularly!

- Wear or put up and display LGBTQI friendly stickers, posters etc. A little rainbow never hurt anyone!

- Be mindful of making assumptions about



peoples sexual identities and orientations. You just never know what someone is going through. Be kind always.

- Be mindful and speak up against antigay slurs like "that is so gay", "homo" etc.
- If you witness any anti LGBTQI discrimination or bulling make sure to report this to teachers or the school principal.
- Become a voice for your LGBTQI friends. It can be hard for them sometimes.
- Allow your LGBTQI friends to feel like they too are respected and treated as equals. After all, they are equals!
- Request books and reading material on LGBTQI for your school library that are up to date and with the times. Most people don't read books anymore – but still!

Parents and Family Members

I cannot stress how important it is for parents and family members to make sure to support their children or their friends who are questioning identifying themselves as LGBTQI or discovering their sexuality. Please be supportive of your children inside the school grounds as well as at home. If there are any issues be available to meet with school teachers and staff to discuss any concerns. Understand that your child needs to know that they are still loved by you and to be reassured of that at a time like this. They need to know that you will always love them no matter what their sexual orientation or gender identification is!

Cont on next page >



If your child is experiencing discrimination or harassment help your child to have a voice and show them that you support them by helping them file complaints if they need to. Be a voice for your child when they lose their own voice because they feel stuck right now.

As a parent there is so much that you can do to show your support and unconditional acceptance. For example, you could help organise events like celebrations for the LGBTQI community at the school. You could hold your child's school accountable for their actions that may violate the school districts and national non-discrimination laws. Every state has a set of anti-bullying laws and you can educate yourself on what those are. Be there for your child, always reassuring them that you love and accept them and that their sexual preference has nothing to do with loving or accepting of them any less!

If you've done any of these things then you are already great support. That's a great start! If you haven't, then now is the best time to start! It's never too late to show that you care and that are an all-accepting human being.

It's so sad that the bullying of youth who are discovering or challenged by their sexuality are at an increased risk of depression, anxiety, substance misuse, and suicidal ideation. Obviously this can also affect their studies as well. We need to be mindful of these factors and be there for our youth in the LGBTQ community.

Coming out

Please remember that each of you is a unique individual. Coming out can sometimes be a lifelong journey, and for others it may not be! It doesn't mean anything! Honour yourself and be kind to yourself throughout this time.

Identifying with LGBTQI sometimes means a journey of ongoing understanding, support, acceptance, and sharing of one's sexual orientation with others. There is no wrong or right way of coming out or of being you! There is no wrong or right way of any sexuality. Love is just love! So, please start by first loving and accepting yourself. Love and approve of yourself so much so that other people's negative opinions wash over you with no meaning attached to them. You are enough, you are so worthy and you are your unique you! Love whichever way that you please.

Nez Erok

www.zenlife counselling.com.au



Male volunteers URGENTLY NEEDED to help kids living with cancer.

Boys living with cancer need male role models to help with their development and confidence at camps which involve everything from rolling in mud to laser tag.



"You'll change lives by making a kid living with cancer smile and laugh. You'll make life-long friends with other volunteers who are selfless, funny and inspiring."
a Camp Quality volunteer



**CAN YOU HELP?
or Know someone who can?**

campquality.org.au/volunteer or 1300 662 267

Hypervigilance, Hope and Horses: Help With The Unknown

By Brenda Tanner

Who would have predicted a year ago, as 2019 kicked off, that Australia would continue to live through the worst drought conditions in recorded history, face catastrophic bushfires, then, just as 2020 brings rain and lifts our spirits, Covid19 invades our shores and turns our lives upside-down.

NOW our daily lives are being driven by a survival-like mentality with news broadcasts talking about increasing pandemic figures, control measures to slow the contagion and social isolation - it can feel as though we're living in a crazy movie and there's no end in sight.

Not surprisingly, we all start to feel more vigilant, on-edge, even overwhelmed and out of control. Actually, this is a perfectly natural response driven by the activation of our primal brain (limbic system); that part of our brain that provides the fight, flight, freeze response, the part of our brain that has developed to help us survive. As a consequence, we can become anxious - Anxiety is driven by continually thinking about the future - "What if, what if, what if?". This can become draining both physically and mentally, and the truth is we can't predict or control the future - the only moment that is real is the one we're living in right now. Everyone in society is affected by these challenging times; Politicians, First Responders, Defence Personnel, Health Workers, Farmers, Business Owners, Teachers, CEOs, Employees, Parents/Care-givers, EVEN our Children.

So, it is really important keep bringing our thoughts back to the present moment; 'What's happening right now?' 'What do I need to do now, today?' to help us stay calm, balanced and healthy. What we do know is 'This time too shall pass' - However, at this stage we don't know when that time is, so looking after our mental wellbeing is more important than ever. Practicing techniques such as Mindfulness can be highly beneficial for adults, youth and young children alike.

Interestingly, we can learn a lot from horses – YES, horses.

Horses are sentient, community creatures (like humans) that are sensitive

to their environment - However, unlike a human they are an animal of prey, so they live in a permanent state of hypervigilance, ready to take-off 'if the wolf comes out of the trees'. They have learned to live symbiotically with the vigilance and only react when absolutely necessary, and once they've taken action they go back to grazing. Quite simply, they live in the moment.

Equine Assisted Therapy (EAT), a highly experiential modality of therapy that is gaining more and more recognition both nationally and internationally. With EAT we incorporate horse into the therapeutic process to help our clients learn to regulate themselves, slow-down come into the present (stepping away from past and future stories) in order to notice their thoughts, behaviour patterns and authentic feelings. Then, we support clients to develop tools and techniques to have greater self-awareness and understand they have choice in any given moment. When therapy is provided by a qualified practitioner, EAT can bring about life-changing results for adults, youth and children.

Like horses, we are community creatures – humans of all ages thrive on social contact. In the coming months, when we're being encouraged to observe social distancing, please remember to stay connected to friends and family - Now IS the time to use social media; FaceTime people you've been meaning to reach out too, put a note in an elderly neighbours mailbox and offer to get some shopping for them. And, remember to reach out to a mental health practitioner if you, or someone you know, needs help.

This time too shall pass and normality, albeit new, will return – Remember Australia is a nation of great people, ALL of whom have outstanding courage in the face of adversity.

Brenda Tanner, Founder of Equine Encounters Australia.

Equine Assisted Therapist / Grad.Cert Gestalt Therapy / Clinical Resource Therapist

www.equineencounters.com.au



Contributors

Connecting with your teen in 2020.

By Tanya Meessmann

EVERY GENERATION of teenagers has marched to the drum that announces, "You don't understand me! Things were so different in your day! Why don't you trust me?!"

It's safe to say parenting has entered a new era of unchartered waters. As a parent of a teenager in 2020, you have a litany of challenges with no guidebook available. The growing concern is that you are no longer confident you actually know what's best for their teenagers.

A LIFE OF UNPREDICTABILITY

If you're raising a teenager today, it's likely you were a teenager yourself somewhere between 1980 and 2000. Trends considered less than favourable to parents were emerging (such as Grunge Rock, hard(er) drugs, dial-up internet and chat rooms, evolving computer games), but they were a slow burn and took a number of years to become 'mainstream'.

Today the evolution of trends and attitudes is exponentially faster, the world is increasingly volatile and information overload is rife. It's no wonder kids are feeling scared, risk-adverse and dubious of authority, while parents are wondering what the heck is going on in their own lives, let alone how to guide and protect their own teenager's minds and emotions.

When life is this different and unpredictable

compared to 'when we were teens', it can feel impossible to find a level to connect with your children.

The first step forward is to drill down into what 'today' actually looks like for your teen:

In our time we had war, today we have terrorism

War is predictable. Generally we know where and when a war may start or is taking place, and can predict its movements so as to prepare physically and mentally. Whereas acts of terrorism are completely unpredictable and not only affect the people hurt or killed, but change the safety psyche of the world.

In our time we had a hole in the ozone layer, today the world is gasping her last breaths

It's likely you remember tackling one environmental challenge at a time back in the 90's, with spray deodorant being the key enemy against the ozone causing unnecessary skin cancer. Today everywhere we turn it feels as though we're on the brink of extinction. Climate change, the Great Barrier Reef, the Amazon forest, polluted air, the list goes on.

In our time we had financial peace, teenagers today have only known a financial crisis climate.

When the GFC hit Australia in 2008, today's teens were just learning to walk. Over the years that followed, not only did many of them experience

parents losing their jobs, they had to move houses and often schools in the fall-out. Since 2008 we have all lived with the lingering fear of a relapse, a sense of unease that the next financial collapse is just around the corner.

In our time we had newspapers and 30-minute news updates, today information is inescapable.

A teenager in the 90's may have caught the front of the Morning Bulletin delivered to their house each day (likely flicked straight through to the cartoons) and then overhearing 30 minutes of news updates on the 7pm news while impatiently watching the clock until 'Friends' came on.

Today, news is fed to both our children and us constantly. A quick check of socials in bed before getting up in the morning has us updated with the latest natural disaster, protests across the globe, increases in gun crime, Royal Family gossip and who wore it best to a Thursday brunch.

In our time we tackled bullying and gossip within a 20km-square radius, today it knows no borders.

Bullying and comparing ourselves to others has existed as long as people themselves, but we used to get 'breaks'. The hours at home before school were peaceful, separated from the cruel playground whispers or fashion critique. After we escaped the school gates we could return to



a place of safety, at home and appreciated by our loved ones.

Today there is no escape. Social media has gifted the world with unlimited connection, both across the globe and throughout 24 hours of each day. Which presents a serious reduction in respite.

SO HOW DO PARENTS CONNECT WITH THEIR CHILDREN IN THIS NEW WORLD?

Arming yourself with a more comprehensive understanding of the world your teenagers are growing up in is designed to empower, not paralyse you.

Now knowing the above situation analysis, some strategies you can use to navigate the 'You have NO idea what it's like!' tantrum are:

1) Recognise that your teenager is living with a heightened sense of anxiety. This is being fed by navigating everyday existence in an unpredictable world. Conversations that feel unnecessarily agitated or angry need to be diffused by staying calm and trying to get them to drill down into what is at the core of their frustration or concern.

<https://girlshapedflames.com>

2) Give yourself a break. Hopefully your parents instilled you with some solid groundwork around raising kids who are kind, respectful and fun, but you haven't had many others go before you to navigate these particular waters

and throw you a floatation device. Seek out reputable guidance and ultimately, follow your gut instinct.

3) Bond over shared concerns, but be productive about it. If you too are worried about climate change, sit together and research ways that you can make changes as a family, or undertake a sustainability project together. If your family was affected by the financial crisis, talk about how you're better educating yourself and measures you're putting in place to be better prepared if the next one hits.

Parents remain some of (if not THE) most important people in a teenager's life to help them recalibrate in times of unease. You know your child better than anyone, and often better than themselves. Making efforts to connect with them regularly sets you both up for a reduction in life-anxiety and an increase in self-confidence, balance and a fulfilling future. All of which ultimately helps them navigate an ever changing world that we are all learning to live in.

—
Tanya Meessmann, Girl Shaped Flames

MAGIC HAPPENS WHEN YOU SHIFT FROM WHAT'S WRONG TO WHAT'S STRONG!

By Stephanie Noon

OUR BRAINS have a negativity bias. We are literally wired to be alert for what's wrong. This has played a very helpful survival purpose to keep us safe from danger, however, it's not so helpful in keeping us happy. Our brains love to notice 'what's wrong' and then give that airtime and magnification, often leading to rumination and an increase in negative emotions. Happiness can be a choice but many of us don't know we have that choice as we feel at the mercy of our negative focus. The great news is that any of us can make the switch to what's strong. As we get to understand our psychological strengths, we can make a choice to deploy them towards problem solving and amplifying the good stuff.

How can you know your psychological strengths, also known as your super-powers? Think of superheroes and how they look like ordinary people on the outside but on the inside they have these incredible super-powers, well so do you! They are called Character Strengths. These have become the most studied and successful Positive Psychology interventions. Research on strengths has repeatedly found this intervention gives a boost to happiness and a decrease to depression, some studies finding effects lasting up to six months.

To find our your super-powers you can take a free evidence-based Character Strengths survey at www.viacharacter.org. They have an Adult survey (18+ years old) and a Youth survey (10 – 17 year old). You will discover that you have 24 strengths of character, some of these are heart strengths like, kindness, love and

gratitude, and some are head strengths such as, love of learning and curiosity. All humans have all 24 strengths, however we have a different preference with the strengths that feel most natural to us.

After taking the survey you will receive a ranking of your preference for using these strengths from 1 through to 24. Magic happens when you make a choice to operate more often from your top 5-7 strengths, they're your super-powers. Please note that the lower strengths on the list are not weaknesses, they are all strengths and you have them all, you just have a lesser preference to use the lower strengths.

Your middle-placed strengths are what we call 'situational strengths', meaning that you can quite easily tap into these if a situation required that strengths. For example, if creativity was your 12th strength, it's not your super-power but if you were in a situation where you needed to be creative, you could access that strength quite easily.

So how does knowing your top strengths help? As an example, if your top strength was curiosity, you will be naturally curious about everything, every day. The power comes in when you intentionally use that strength to shift an automatic 'what's wrong' thought (eg, my friend is angry with me today) into a 'what's strong' thought (eg, I'm curious as to what might be putting my friend into a bad mood, I will see if I can help). Because curiosity is your top strength, this new what's strong perspective will feel easy and natural. The evidence shows that when we are functioning out of our top

strengths it feels energising, easy and natural.

So how can you unleash your super-powers to live a 'what's strong' life? Here's some steps to follow:

1. Try to be alert for when your brain wants to take you on a 'what's wrong' journey. This may be about what's wrong with you, what's wrong with the people around you, what's wrong with your environment. Just notice when you take on the 'what's wrong' lens.

2. Once you've identified that you're heading into a what's wrong focus, see if you can give yourself permission to gently stop that story, recognising that it's not playing to your strengths and it's a joy-stealer.

3. Now think about which of your wonderful top 5-7 strengths of character you can use to bring a what's strong focus to the situation instead.

4. Once you've viewed the situation again through this new, natural, energising and authentic strengths lens, take a moment to pat yourself on the back for not following the brain's first what's wrong view. Also notice how you have it in you to make that choice time and time again. Doing so increases life satisfaction, wellbeing and happiness. And who wouldn't want more of that?

Goodluck making your magic happen by unlocking your super-powers today.

Stephanie Noon - Positive Psychology Coach

www.livelife coaching.com.au



My Rainbow: Chakras for Teens

By April ter Hede

WHAT ARE CHAKRAS?

THE WORD chakra means 'wheel' in Sanskrit. Chakras are energy centres, often depicted as wheels or flowers. They receive and transmit energy, enabling the body to function. There are seven principle chakras in your body. They each have an associated colour and gland, running from the base of your spine to the crown of your head. Chakras are associated with our physical, mental and emotional health. When your chakras are balanced, you function at your best. When they are imbalanced or blocked, you feel sick, sluggish and "out of whack".

The first, the Root Chakra, is located at the base of the spine and is red. It deals with survival and is blocked by fear.

The second, the Sacral Chakra, is located between the hips and is orange. It deals with pleasure and is blocked by guilt.

The third, the Solar Plexus Chakra, is located in the stomach and is yellow. It deals with willpower and is blocked by shame.

The fourth, the Heart Chakra, is located in the heart and is green. It deals with love and is blocked by grief.

The fifth, the Throat Chakra, is located in the throat and is blue. It deals with the truth and is blocked by the lies we tell ourselves.

The sixth, the Third Eye Chakra, is located in the centre of the forehead and is indigo. It deals with insight and is blocked by illusion.

The seventh, the Crown Chakra, is located at the crown of the head and is violet. It deals with pure cosmic energy and is blocked by earthly attachment.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT FOR TEENAGERS TO LEARN ABOUT CHAKRAS?

Giving children and teenagers tools on how to interpret their experience in their body, helps empower them to make decisions. They learn to listen to themselves and direct their energy in a conscious way. This will allow them to settle into themselves and their authentic power.

Other benefits include: feeling more grounded and stable, balances emotions, increases compassion for others, improves concentration, increases self-awareness, reduces build-up of excess energy, increases self-confidence, reduces boredom, promotes creativity and creative expression, encourages less screen time and much more!

KEEPING CHAKRAS BALANCED

Each chakra likes to be cared for in a different way, depending on what harms or blocks it. It is important for people of all ages, to regularly participate in activities that make them feel peaceful, that they have "let something go" or "expressed themselves", to feel balanced. There are many activities that will benefit, however the goal is to find which activities feel right for the individual. Some teenagers prefer to do activities on their own while others love it when the adults do the activities with them. Researching online for activities is a great tool to get started, but I encourage everyone to use their imagination, be brave and to try things they think of – the chakras will love it!

Activities for each chakra can be designed around the following:

Root chakra: releasing fears.

Sacral chakra: releasing blame, guilt and forgiving yourself.

Solar Plexus chakra: releasing letdowns and disappointments in yourself.

Heart chakra: releasing the pain of sadness in



loss and looking for love in new forms.

Throat chakra: releasing denial and lies you tell yourself, finding joy in your magical truth.

Third Eye chakra: releasing illusions of separation and looking for things that show all is one.

Crown chakra: releasing attachment and exploring impermanence.

A few of the children & teens who have participated in the "My Rainbow" Program at Blue Soul Space, were asked what some of their favourite activities were. They said:

"Choosing a random PeaceMakers Card* and doing a Sandplay Story on it"

"Cuddling my PeaceMaker Dolphin* and telling it my worries"

"Looking through my family photo albums with my dad"

"Painting my own affirmation cards to look at when I feel down"

"Writing poems and songs"

"Meditating and imagining the colours"

"Writing down 3 things I am grateful for when I wake up"

"Dancing in the backyard with my shoes off, with music up really loud. Especially when mum does it too"

"Planting a tree to remind me of my best friend who took his life"

"Taking a break from Snapchat"

I hope you and your children enjoy your journey along the rainbow.

—
April ter Hede, Blue Soul Space

www.bluesoul space.com.au



Trapeze is movement, courage, craft and art.

Created by Leopold Leotard, a genius who gave the world both, trapeze and leotard in the 19th century, trapeze took on many permutations and is now seen as art, craft and exercise.

In the last few decades trapeze broke out of circus and became available to the public, much like gym, martial arts or fencing. The important difference with sports is that when it comes to flying trapeze, the competition is replaced by camaraderie and mutual support.

Beyond that, trapeze provides a space where boundaries between fitness, movement, body, craft and art are blurred. Trapeze gives a taste of what it is like to perform in a situation that demands courage. Climbing a ladder to the platform 10 meters above the ground is a feat of its own for those of us afraid of height. While safely attached by a safety line, as all the beginners are, step by step, the climber then is able to challenge themselves to reach new heights.

Once on the trapeze platform, the flyer is instructed to push the hips forward and to hold the chest proud. This not only helps to reach the bar, but also imparts confidence and gives dignity to the flyer, who is at all times supported by one coach on the platform and another on the ground, holding the safety lines.

Another interesting aspect of trapeze is trust. While the flyer's safety is ensured by both the safety lines and the trapeze net, the act of entrusting your life, even symbolically, into the hands of a fellow human being brings an interesting dimension to the experience. These dimensions include trust, bonding, vulnerability and the level of support that few other fitness activities have to offer.

A heady cocktail of fear and exhilaration makes one alert and plays with a sense of time. The flyer hears 'put your second hand on the bar, ready, hep!'. The flyer takes a leap of faith and jumps off the platform. Things

start moving fast. The air rushes past the face and the body, as the momentum of the swing takes the trapeze artist to the apex of the swing. In the thick of it the now performer has to hear the instructions of the coach, who helps the flyer to orient and position body correctly for the trick.

Here, the flyer has to do their part, working with the momentum of the swing and, in case of a trapeze classic 'knee hang', hook their legs on the bar. Next, the flyer has to take their hands off the bar and look for the catcher, stretching their hands towards them and on the command 'hep', take a second leap of faith and part with the white bar, fly through the air and make a catch.

Once the trapeze artist has gained prowess in the art, they are able to catch the trapeze bar and make their way back on the platform in a third leap, however, the feeling of making a catch is exhilarating in its own right. This is a celebration of a teamwork, trust, courage and skill. As the performer masters trick after a trick and gains further confidence, ability to safely land is gained and the lines are then taken away to create a breath taking performance. Imagine the bonding that happens on this journey with those close to you or, perhaps with the world at large. This is where strong friendships are born and maintained.

It is also a place where many build their self-confidence by achieving things they thought were not physically or mentally possible before. It is quite incredible how something that is described as improbable is achieved in just a 1.5 hour session. The same high level of pride and achievement that is experienced by beginner flyers and elite flyers makes this sport extremely relevant.

Beyond this, it is an activity that brings people together, promotes social bonding, gives courage, confidence, health and a pathway to mastery. Here, people care for each other. In a world where competitiveness is incessantly encouraged, trapeze provides a respite, instead promoting the values of camaraderie and mutual support.

—
Genia Levant

www.circusarts.com.au



PUBLIC SPEAKING

Public Speaking can be scary.

SO THERE are good reasons why public speaking can feel scary. But, it really doesn't have to, and that's where resilience kicks in.

So what is resilience?

Resilience is one of those buzzwords we hear all the time, but don't really understand what it means.

Resilience isn't ignoring things which go wrong, nor is it shouting back at the world when things don't go your way. It isn't bottling things up (which almost always ends in an explosion at some point down the track), and it isn't (always) just getting on with it.

Confidence & optimism

One of the best ways to improve resilience is to be comfortable with yourself and confident in your ability to overcome hardship. For most of us, that's way easier said than done.

Public speaking is definitely one way we can do this though. Exposure therapy – putting yourself through something you fear – is an effective way of dealing with phobias because it helps people understand that the sky isn't going to fall in, and the worst case scenarios are exceptionally unlikely. This helps us build confidence in our ability to deal with circumstances that would ordinarily instil fear, and optimism about how bright the future will be.

Be kind to yourself

Another way to build resilience is, quite simply, to be kind to ourselves.

Confidence can definitely help with this, but so can our inner-monologues – if we train them properly.

We shouldn't ignore the flaws with our presentation – that would involve putting our

heads in the sand – but instead recognise that there are things we need to work on.

This not only helps improve your skills in the future – it helps you feel more confident that your audience will be receptive to subsequent speeches.

Taken together, these steps help us retrain our inner-monologue – rather than contemplating the dire situation we find ourselves in, these habits help us look for positives in otherwise unfortunate circumstances, and help us look towards a future where things can (and likely will) actually improve.

Embrace failure

We all know the old saying 'learning from our mistakes', but isn't always something we reflect in our day to day lives.

It is important to remember that failure should never be the enemy. We tend to learn our greatest lessons from our mistakes. Most children will touch a hot stove in their lives, but only once. It is important we don't succeed every now and then, and that we're not sheltered from failure, because life is realistically full of it.

We won't get every job we apply for, date every person we're interested in, or top every test we take – that is life. We don't have to like it, but in order to live a happy life we need to acknowledge that it's true.

The most important thing to do when we fail is to tell ourselves that it's okay. From a public speaking perspective, it's okay that our speech

didn't quite go to plan. We can try again, or if the opportunity has passed, there will be other opportunities to succeed down the track.

This involves changing the narrative of what might otherwise feel like a tragedy. Rather than think of the Event as an unmitigated disaster, we should instead look back on it and simply accept that it has happened, that we have failed, but that it won't define the rest of our lives. In most cases, our failures won't even impact what is happening next week.

Failure shouldn't be a dirty word in our vocabulary.

Building resilience

Taking the above steps – exposing ourselves to our fears, taming our inner-monologues and changing the narrative around failure – are all excellent ways to build our resilience, and public speaking is a low risk way that we can start forming positive habits.

If we act now – when the stakes are low, but the possible gains are high – we'll be in a much better position to react in a healthy, positive and confident manner when true disaster strikes. Even though things may seem scary when that happens, they don't have to be – and having positive habits in place will make picking ourselves up again much, much easier.

—
Mark Slavin
Managing Director of Speaking Schools

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Kids' Video Game Obsession Isn't Really About Video Games. It's About Unmet Psychological Needs.

By Andrew Kinch

MANY PARENTS are concerned with their child's seemingly obsessive video game play. Fortnite, the most recent gaming phenomenon, has taken the world by storm and has parents asking whether the shooter game is okay for kids.

The short answer is yes, Fortnite is generally fine. Furthermore, parents can breathe easier knowing that research suggests gaming (on its own) does not cause disorders like addiction.

However, there's more to the story. A comprehensive answer to the question of whether video games are harmful must take into account other factors. Fortnite is just the latest example of a pastime some kids spend more time on than is good for them. But parents need to understand why kids play as well as when to worry and when to relax.

Addiction, Really?

The word "addiction" gets tossed around quite a bit these days. It's not uncommon to hear people say that they are addicted to chocolate or shoe shopping, but if it isn't causing serious harm and impairment to daily function, it isn't an addiction. It's an overindulgence.

This isn't just semantics. An addiction involves a lack of control despite adverse consequences. Parents may worry their kids are addicted, but if the child can pull themselves away from a game

to join the family for a conversation over dinner, and shows interest in other activities, like sports or socializing with friends, then they are not addicted.

Generally, parents panic when their kid's video game playing comes at the expense of doing other things like studying or helping around the house. But let's be honest, kids have been avoiding these activities for ages. Equally true is the fact parents have been complaining about their unhelpful children well before the first video game was plugged into its socket.

In fact, moderate video gameplay has been shown to be beneficial. A study conducted at Oxford by Dr. Andrew Przybylski revealed playing about one hour per day enhanced psychological well-being, while when taken to an extreme, playing over three hours per day, was correlated with less well-being.

The real question should be what is it about the special draw of gaming that makes it the preferred pastime of so many millions of kids? What makes it so difficult for even non-addicted kids to step away from video games sometimes?

The answer has to do with the way games address basic psychological needs.

What Kids Are Looking For (And Not Getting)

Fortnite, like any well-designed video game,

satisfies what we are all looking for. According to Drs. Edward Deci and Richard Ryan, people need three things to flourish. We look for competence — the need for mastery, progression, achievement, and growth. We need autonomy — the need for volition and freedom of control over our choice. And finally, we strive for relatedness — the need to feel like we matter to others and that others matter to us. Unfortunately, when considering the state of modern childhood, many kids aren't getting enough of these three essential elements.

School, where kids spend most of their waking hours, is in many ways the antithesis of a place where kids feel autonomy. There, kids are told what to do, where to be, what to think and what to wear. Alarms and bells orchestrate their movements with farm-chattel precision while teachers educate on topics that some students couldn't care less about. Attendance is compulsory and students have little say in what they are learning. Of course, this isn't every student's experience and different countries, schools, and teachers use different approaches to educate kids. But while some argue discipline and control provide structure, it's clear why teachers and students might struggle with motivation in the classroom.

Gamers feel competence when they practice strengths to achieve their aims. In a game, players have the autonomy to call the shots, do what they want, and experiment with



creative strategies to solve problems. Games are also social outlets where players can feel relatedness. In Fortnite, for example, players often meet in the virtual environment to chat and socialize because doing so in the real world is often inconvenient or off limits. Whereas previous generations were allowed to simply play after school and form close social bonds, many kids today are raised by fearful and overworked parents who insist their kids either attend a regimented afterschool program or stay behind lock and key at home.

We shouldn't be surprised when the confinement kids find themselves in today often yields behaviors we don't understand and don't like. Games satisfy psychological needs other areas of life are not satiating.

Of course, none of this is to say video games are a good substitution — quite the opposite. While a well-designed game attempts to satisfy these needs, it can't come close to the deep satisfaction real life and real human connection can provide.

No game can give a child the feeling of competence that comes from accomplishing a difficult task or learning a new skill on their own accord. Fortnite can't compete with the exhilaration that comes from the autonomy of exploring reality, where a child is free to ask questions and unlock mysteries in the real world. No social media site can give a kid the sense of relatedness, safety, and warmth that comes from an adult who loves that child unconditionally just the way they are, no matter what, and takes the time to tell them so.

Some kids suffer from gaming disorders, but such dependencies are often coupled with pre-existing conditions including problems with impulse control. This, of course, does not abdicate companies from their moral

responsibility to help problem gamers. Maybe it's time they implement policies to identify and help those with disorders.

For most children, however, parents understanding the deeper truth behind what kids are getting out of games empowers them to take steps to give kids more of what they need. It also helps parents get into a state of mind to talk rationally about overuse instead of succumbing to the hysterics and moral panic that our parents used to try and force us to stop listening to rock 'n' roll, watching MTV, playing pinball, or reading comic books. Video games are this generation's outlet and some kids use them as a tool to escape the same way some of us use our own flavor of dissociative devices to tune out reality for a while.

Instead of repeating the mistakes of previous generations with heavy-handed tactics, let's understand the psychological source of the problem. Ultimately, parents' goal should be to help kids learn strategies for coping with overuse on their own so that they do what's good for them even when we're not around. By teaching self-regulating habits, promoting intentional gaming, and helping kids find suitable alternatives, parents can help kids find what they are really looking for.

Be Vulnerable and Give-Up Some Control

As studies show, there's nothing wrong with a moderate amount of gameplay. Looking out for symptoms of excessive use, while opening a dialogue about how much is too much, can empower kids to take control of their habits for themselves.

One suggestion is to make time to watch them play and try playing yourself. Become their biggest fan and let them be the expert at

something. Letting them coach you through a game will give them the feeling of competency they crave while strengthening your relatedness.

Be vulnerable. Show them you struggle with tech overuse at times as well. Try letting them set their own limits for how much game time is healthy and help them find ways to stick to the time limits they set for themselves instead of imposing yet more rules.

If kids see parents are on their team and not just an obstacle to their needs being met, the all-too-common adversarial relationship begins to change. When kids see parents are not trying to stop them from having fun but are rather helping them keep things in perspective and in the right proportion, they become allies instead of enemies.

The goal at the end of the day is to help build resilience and self regulation (with Training wheels) and getting everyone involved on the same page and speaking a common language.

This post was co-authored by Andrew Kinch and Nir Eyal. Andrew is the founder of GameAware.

—
Andrew Kinch

www.gameaware.com.au



So much fun and so insightful:

"Personalities in the Classroom"

As ADULT employees, we are often fortunate to undergo professional development with our teams. This professional development tends to focus on building effective teams, dealing with conflict, having difficult conversations and maximising career development opportunities within the organisation. Many professional development opportunities use personality profiling and behavioural tools to help staff members understand themselves and others more effectively. Once colleagues understand themselves and their responses to certain behaviours, team members engage more effectively, conflict reduces and output increases.

If you haven't been fortunate enough to undergo professional development around profiling, you can take assessments online. The only thing is, it's very easy to read an option and click on it without stopping to think about it. This frequently happens with such assessments, especially with young people. Unfortunately, many young people want the results without carefully considering the response options and/or don't fully understand what the multiple answer option means. Click, click, click and voila, the assessment spits out a response, and shines – an often inaccurate – light on who they really are. As such, reflections from young people and their teachers or youth workers often state that the 'type' that pops up at the end of the quiz isn't accurate. The young person looks at the results, shakes their head and can't relate. After all, having a 'personality type' is a new concept to them.

Personality tests can be thought-provoking, insightful, and fun. The key is to assist young people and encourage them not to get too hung

up on their results, whichever profiling tool is used to assess them. Even though we grow and change as we learn new things and have new experiences, researchers have found that our overall personalities are surprisingly stable over time. By providing a young person with an opportunity to understand themselves at a young age, imagine how much more mature they will be in their decision-making processes, their ability to deal with others and their career choices. Imagine hearing an, "Oh, yes! I know what I would like to do when I leave school," instead of that resolute, "I dunno."

Many young people fall into the trap of mistakenly believing that most other people share the same attitudes and traits they do. Then they get frustrated, upset and angry when someone behaves in a way which is completely opposite to their way of doing things. They feel misunderstood and like they don't belong. By undergoing personality profiling, the young person not only gains a greater insight into their own preferences, but also realise that there are others who are like just them out there. They also learn the preferences of their classmates, friends, teachers and family members.

Do personality profiling tools pigeonhole or label people?

A question that seems to concern some people is, "Do personality profiling tools categorise individuals?" The answer is, "Yes." However, categorising is not necessarily a negative thing as it helps people to understand that they are not alone in the world. Importantly, this is not to be confused with labelling or pigeonholing. If the question is, "Do personality profiling tools pigeonhole or label people?" the answer is, "No." On the contrary, they embrace the fact that they are not alone in the world and that there are others out there who will 'get them' for who they are. They feel proud of who they are and comforted in the knowledge that there

are others in the world who share many of their values and perspectives.

Understanding personality types can offer many benefits to young people

It can help a young person identify their likes and dislikes: – including themselves.

It can help a young person understand which situations allow them to perform at their best.

It can help a young person better understand their strengths and weaknesses.

It can help young people to better understand others.

Implementing personality profiling into the classroom

Should you choose to implement sessions dedicated to looking at personality types in the classroom, be mindful of the following:

- It is a very good idea to identify which personality type you are before introducing the concept of personality types to your young people.
- Have a positive mindset. While it is true that we cannot get along with everyone and we cannot like everyone, that's just part of being human. It is therefore our responsibility, as adults, to ensure that we are respectful of one another, regardless of our personality types.
- Be prepared and fully understand the concept of personality profiling and the types otherwise you may be inadvertently telling young people the wrong information

Jenny Gleeson

www.lifeworx.com.au

SKIN BODY MIND

LOVE LIFE BE FREE

Would you agree that once you put on your favourite outfit that works perfectly for you, you have an immediate increase in confidence and feel great? Looking great comes back to how you actually feel about you.

Would you agree when you look and feel your best, you feel more confident, joyful, calmer, energetic, able to focus more easily and deal with challenging situations in a more productive way?

Ultimately to look your best it starts with the mind however being able to experience positive external changes due to simple habits, creates a "how to attitude" as you learn the ability to change your environment very quickly.

So why not learn professional self care tools to make more positive long term physical change in turn motivating you to take on further tools to help balance body and mind to help build self confidence to a stage where you can respect, love and enjoy the truly amazing you.

"Young people are most concerned about coping with stress, school or study problems and body image in that order"

Have you thought you were fat?

Have you experienced dry skin, redness, random spots like acne and then later told by your mum to use dove soap which actually made it 10 times worse?

Have you thought during conversation "do I sound stupid and then you suddenly go blank and everything gets really awkward?"

Have you done things others have asked, that you really didn't want to and you knew was not of positive benefit to you?

The thing is if you remove the junk you will look and feel your best. Balance in all areas is key to be your best you. You have it in you, you just need to find it.



By Alira De Palma

Love the way you look and feel. Become EMPOWERED so you can make your own informed choices. Focus better, handle challenging situations more easily, feel energetic, happier and calmer.

Below is the 7 step EMPOWER System that can be used by most. Any specific illness please consult a professional.

E-xploring Environmental Causes: Ask yourself questions

- What are you surrounded by daily and who?
- What are you doing at the moment to nurture yourself?
- What sort of cleaning agents do you use?
- Do you sit on computers all day?
- Are you in air conditioning all day?
- What sort of exercise do you do and how often?
- Do you lead a busy lifestyle?

M-isconception around how these environmental causes are actually affecting your skin, body and mind on a cellular and anatomic level. The accumulative effect. How are your thoughts/words affecting you? To have some understanding really requires a variety of professionals knowledge.

The myth is that you are just teenagers and will grow out of it.

Myth is just seeing a counsellor/physiologist is all that is needed for self esteem where complete solutions that are customised is best.

P-reservation, Protect, Pamper: Preservation Protect and Pamper your self.

O-xidisation & Oxygen: One will kill and mutate cells and the other will regenerate, invigorate and balance you.

W-hole food and wholesome: Whole Foods and Wholesome create balance.

E-nvironment, Exercise: Doing a walk for 20mins a day for 6 weeks has been proven to work more

affectionately than antidepressants, while it also flushes out toxins from the body.

Doing something everyday that is fun and surrounding yourself with positive people actually changes our facial structure by stimulating facial muscles to heighten your cheek bones and sculpt your jawline.

R-emove, Rebuild, Rebalance the mind. Remove the negative beliefs you have of your self and rebuild to positive beliefs in turn to rebalance the mind reducing stress levels. Stress in depression increases acidity accelerating ageing and increasing acne.

Start by looking in your eyes in the mirror first thing in the morning saying "I love you, I truly do love you". It will be hard at first, over 30 days you will start to feel comfortable and see the positive affects in yourself.

A clear understanding increases confidence in the choices you are making in life.

With overall improvement in the skin, you can see the difference and in turn feel happier with the way in which you look.

Feeling happy about yourself has an overall improvement in your ability to face challenging situations with confidence. This also gives rise to increased motivation towards a healthy lifestyle as you begin to see the positive affect such a small lifestyle change can make.

Most people would like to look good, they are generally not aware how thinking has additional effect on this. Improving appearances can be achieved easily with the right system in place motivating you towards larger heights for personal growth. Remember take one step at a time to maintain balance. I wish you blessings on your self care journey.

Alira De Palma

www.skinbodymind.com.au

Get Help

Nationwide

The National Cannabis Information & Helpline https://ncpic.org.au/helpline/ 1800 30 40 50	Headspace Chat Online https://eheadspace.org.au/ Online chat available 1800 650 890 (9AM -1AM)	1800RESPECT https://www.1800respect.org.au/ 1800 737 732	Blue Knot Foundation Helpline http://www.blueknot.org.au/Helpline 1300 657 380	Lifeline http://www.lifeline.org.au/13 11 14	The Butterfly Foundation http://thebutterflyfoundation.org.au/ 1800 33 4673
Kids Help Line http://www.kidshelp.com.au/ 1800 55 18 00	Veterans and Veterans Families Counselling Service (VVCS) http://www.dva.gov.au/ 1800 011 046	PANDA - National Perinatal Depression Helpline http://www.panda.org.au/ 1300 726 306	Australian Government: AIHW MHSA http://mhsa.aihw.gov.au/home	SANE Australia http://www.sane.org/1800 187 263	Gambling Helpline http://www.gamblinghelponline.org.au/ Online chat available 1800 858 858
Suicide Call Back Service https://www.suicidecallbackservice.org.au Online chat available 1300 659 467	Family Drug Support http://www.fds.org.au/ 1300 368 186	Al-Anon http://www.al-anon.org.au/contact 1300 ALANON (1300 252 666)	Alcoholics Anonymous http://www.aa.org.au/1300 222 222	Quit Line http://www.quit.org.au/13 78 48	Mind Connect https://www.mindaustralia.org.au/contact-us.html1300 286 463
					Mensline Australia http://www.mensline.org.au/1300 78 99 78

Victoria

Youth Drug and Alcohol Advice (YoDAA) https://www.ysas.org.au	Pharmacotherapy, Advocacy, Mediation & Support (PAMS) Advice for anyone experiencing trouble with their pharmacotherapy program (Methadone, Suboxone etc.) 1800 443 844
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New South Wales

1800 ICE ADVICE Advice and support for people who use ice, their families and health professionals. 1800 423 238	DirectLine Confidential alcohol and drug counselling and referral line. 1800 888 236	Alcohol and Drug Information Service (ADIS) A 24-hour confidential information, advice and referral telephone service. 1800 151 045
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Queensland

Alcohol and Drug Information Service (ADIS) Telephone information, counselling and referral. 1800 177 833	Counselling Online If you prefer to speak to someone 1800 177 833 (Regional) 07 3837 5989 (metro)
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ACT

Alcohol and Drug Information Service (ADIS) 24-hour telephone service offering information, advice, referral, intake, assessment and support. 02 6207 9977
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Northern Territory

Alcohol and Drug Information Service (ADIS) 24-hour Alcohol and Drug Telephone Information and counselling service. 1800 131 350
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Tasmania

Alcohol and Drug Information Service (ADIS) A 24-hour telephone information and counselling line. 1800 811 994
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If you are in an emergency, or at immediate risk of harm to yourself or others, please contact emergency services on 000

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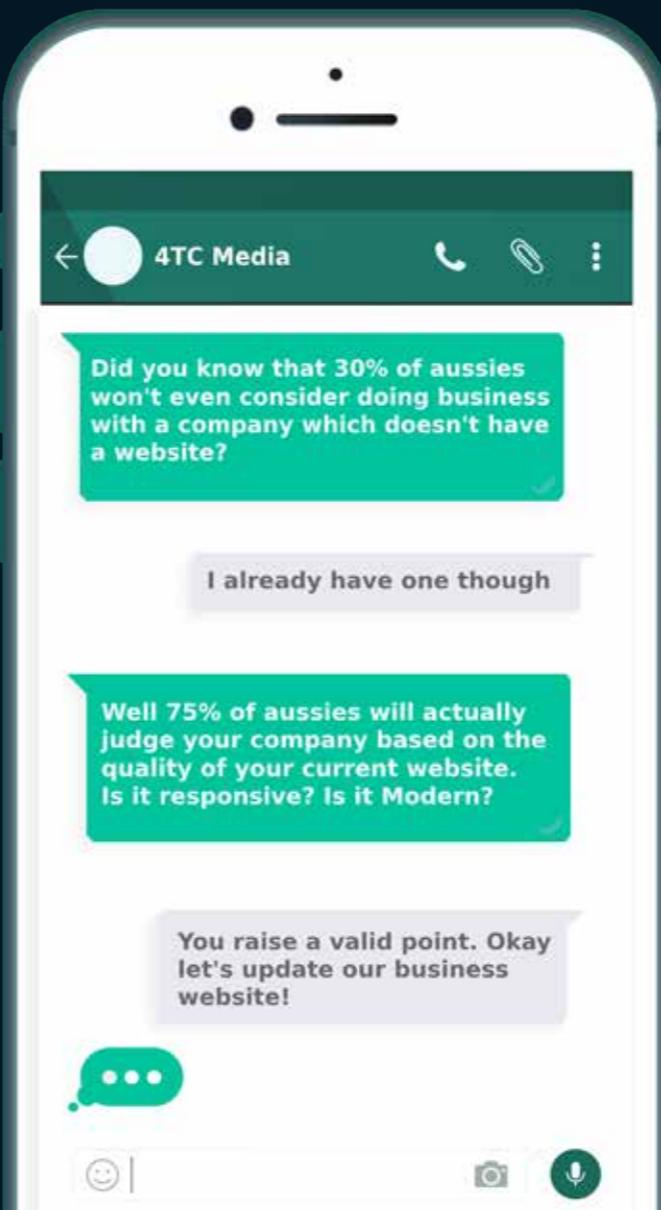
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