

# INPSYNC

*Official Monthly Newsletter of InPsync Psychology*



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InPsync *Psychology*

*'InPsync with Wellbeing'*

# Technology and Mental Health for Young People.

**99% of young people are online every day.**



Associate Professor Jane Burns from The Young and Well Cooperative Research Centre urges practitioners, teachers and parents to embrace technology in order to support young people, as research is sending a clear message; technology is here to stay. The Young and Well Cooperative Research Centre explores the role of technology in young people's lives, and how technology can be used to improve the mental health and wellbeing of young people aged 12 to 25. Many parents find it difficult to manage boundaries and limits around screen time and are concerned about the readily available and potentially harmful content their young person is able to access online. Due to this, today's column aims to explore some positive ways parents can assist their children to use online resources to promote and encourage their mental health and general wellbeing.

## GENERAL WELLBEING:

**MoodGYM:** <https://moodgym.anu.edu.au>

A website which aims to help young people to identify and overcome problem emotions and develop good coping skills for the future.

MoodGYM is a free, fun, interactive program consisting of a number of different modules.

The modules explore issues such as:

- Why you feel the way you do
- Changing the way you think
- Changing 'warped' thoughts
- Knowing what makes you upset
- Assertiveness and interpersonal skills training

We would like to think that by the time you finish MoodGYM you will have:

- An understanding of how emotions arise, and how they might be modified
- Learned how to modify your thinking so that you are less prone to get upset
- Picked up a few hints on managing stress
- Learned a few things about what influences self-esteem
- Developed a better understanding of relationships and how they might be handled
- Developed some practical ways to help you cope with difficult events

**Smiling Mind:** <http://smilingmind.com.au/>  
(Also available as an App)

Smiling Mind is modern meditation for young people. It's a simple tool that gives a sense of calm, clarity and contentment. Smiling Mind is a unique web and App-based program developed by a team of psychologists with expertise in youth and adolescent therapy, Mindfulness Meditation and web-based wellness programs. Smiling Mind is a free tool that will assist in improving the lives of young Australians. In recent years, Mindfulness Meditation has surged in popularity for use in the treatment of stress, resilience, anxiety, depression and other physical and mental illnesses.

**ReachOut: <http://au.reachout.com/>**

ReachOut.com is Australia's leading online youth mental health service. It's the perfect place to start if you're not sure where to look. Every year it helps hundreds of thousands of young Australians with information support and stories on everything from finding your motivation, through to getting through really tough times.

Some online programs offered through the service include:

**WorkOut:** an online training program that tests and improves your mental fitness. Kick start your brain with training programs that are fun, easy to understand and improve the quality of the mind.

**ReachOutCentral.com.au (ROC):** an online game designed to help you learn and improve skills for life such as communication, problem solving and optimistic thinking online in a virtual setting using real life scenarios.

Throughout the game, comments from a narrator appear to question your decisions, provide advice and encouragement or link you to fact sheets on ReachOut.com that might be relevant or useful in the game play. A major aim of ROC is for you to transfer the knowledge and skills you gain online from the game into your lives off line.

**iCounselor Anxiety**

This app is a self-help tool which provides skills and tips to assist reduce anxiety.

**Deep Sleep with Andrew Johnson**

A guided meditation intended to help you overcome insomnia and get to sleep. Helpful for young parents and their parents!

**STUDY TOOLS:****Thedesk: <https://www.thedesk.org.au/>**

Thedesk aims to support Australian students to achieve mental and physical health and wellbeing. Being a student can be a challenging time and many students do not access support services for a range of reasons including time pressures, not knowing where to go for help and feeling embarrassed. Providing resources online means that more people will be able to get help to improve their wellbeing and be able to study more effectively. Thedesk offers free access to online modules, tools, quizzes and advice.

**Cold Turkey: [getcoldturkey.com](http://getcoldturkey.com)**

This website temporarily blocks you off social media sites, games, programs and any other distracting websites. Imagine how fast you could do your work without all those distractions!

**iProcrastinate:**

Search iTunes store for iPhone or iPad version. An application designed to assist you with time management and organisation.

**Take a Stand App:**

Search iTunes store for iPhone or iPad version. The Take a Stand Together App was developed by all Australian education authorities, working together to create safe and supportive school environments free from bullying, harassment and violence. Take a Stand Together provides students with tips and advice which they can apply to different bullying situations.

*Written by Natasha Ascenzo*

# Listening to your Teenager



In conversations with teenagers the most common complaint heard regarding parents sounds something like “they never listen to what I have to say,” “they don’t understand.” Ironically, a similar sentiment is often echoed by parents who will complain that their teens never listen to them. While relationships thrive on being heard, parents and teenagers often hear messages from each other at times which communicate “I’m not interested in what you think, say or feel.” In 2011 the Mission Australia National Survey of Young Australians discovered that 75% of young people valued family relationships. As your daughter grows towards adulthood and as your relationship changes it becomes even more important to try and see things through each other’s eyes. If you are able to see issues from your teenager’s perspective not only will you have a better understanding of what life feels like for her right now, but you will also be better able to respond to their needs. Additionally, by assisting your daughter to see the world from other perspectives including your own you are equipping your teen with invaluable life tools to navigate the world as an emerging adult. So how can parents and teenagers improve their communication and demonstrate a willingness to listen and understand each other?

## Learning how to Listen:

The first step towards a genuine connection is learning how to listen. If you as a parent are able to model good listening skills, your teen will also learn to be a thoughtful listener. In modelling good listening skills, your daughter will come to learn that you are available, approachable and genuinely interested in her needs and well-being.

## Active Listening:

Active listening means being ready to listen carefully to your daughter when she wants to talk. This involves listening completely by ignoring distractions, restraining from interrupting and making an effort to understand what your daughter has said. Here are some listening guidelines to try the next time your teen is ready to talk:

- **Listen with your entire self:** When your daughter says, "I hate my English teacher," give her your undivided attention, even if it's hard to do. Look through the mail or read the newspaper later. Make and maintain eye contact. Avoid gestures of impatience, like tapping your fingers or jiggling your foot. It's important to focus on the conversation, no matter how many other things you may have on your mind. Turn off the radio and television. Move to a quiet room in the house to minimise interruptions to your conversation.

- **Encourage the conversation, but try not to interrupt with your opinions:** This can be hard to do. If your daughter pauses for a moment while telling you about a disagreement she had with a teacher, don't jump in to fill up the space with your own reaction. Be patient; she may have more to say. Once you've given her enough time to collect her thoughts, encourage her to tell you more by asking, "Then what happened?" or, "How did you feel when that happened?"

• **Rephrase or repeat what your teenager has said:** "The coach really made you mad," or, "You thought he would listen to you but he didn't." This has two purposes: it lets your teenager know you're listening and that you care enough to want to be certain that you understand what she said and how she feels. Restating helps ensure that you're truly hearing your teen. If you restate the situation incorrectly, it gives your teen a chance to re-explain, too.

• **Display attentive body language:** Skip the eye rolling, sighs, arms crossed tightly against the chest, and looking over your shoulder or into the distance. Sit cross-legged on the floor or couch, or turn a chair around and sit with your arms resting on the back. Lean forward slightly, nodding as appropriate.

• **Remember to focus on your teen's needs:** The discussions should centre on your teen and not on long-winded descriptions of your experiences as a teen. The goal is to focus on your teen, not yourself. Remind yourself to listen first and try to offer short reflective, non-judgmental comments that encourage more conversation from your son or daughter.

### **The Listening Exercise:**

- Choose five minutes during a time when you might ordinarily be talking with your teenager. Don't let your teenager know in advance.
- Sit near a clock or position your watch on the table or counter where it won't be obvious that you're looking at it.
- For five minutes, just listen. Don't say anything. Don't evaluate, don't judge, and don't interrupt. You can show your interest by nodding, or saying "and then what happened?" Just stay away from commentary and advice.

If you're like many parents, you may find that the first three or four minutes feel nearly impossible to get through -- that you can't wait for the full five minutes to pass so that you can leap in with your own comments. But you may also find that something unexpected happens just before the five-minute mark approaches; you become so deeply engaged in listening that you no longer care when the five minutes are up. And your teenager will have what she really wants -- your full attention and the chance to hear her own voice and ideas.

*Written by Natasha Ascenzo.*

*Taken from: - Sticking with your teen – Joe White - Staying Connected to your Teenager: How to keep them talking to you and how to hear what they're really saying – Michael Riera*

# The 7 Thought-Habits of Highly Self-Confident People

To gain self-confidence, practice these 7 research-based thinking habits.



Are there mental habits that will increase your self-confidence? Most definitely. You'll read about 7 such powerful thinking habits below.

My last blog revealed the very best mental habit I know for building self-confidence: "The Daily Success Review." This short and simple 3-minute procedure nudges you to tune into the little things you do right every day instead of over-focusing on what you think you did wrong. I have nicknamed this daily technique, "The Small-Success Review," to counter the destructive mindset of thinking that only huge and dramatic successes and accomplishments really "count" when it comes to bolstering self-esteem. In addition to the Small-Successes method, there are other ways to increase your self-confidence just by altering your mindset slightly. Of course, it is also important to practice behaviors that will increase your confidence and to learn to project self-confidence to others, and those will be the topics of upcoming blogs. This blog will spotlight the thinking activities you can do right now to build a self-esteem mindset.

Below are 7 of my favorites:

1. Don't worry if you don't feel confident all the time. It sounds counter-intuitive, doesn't it? But Dr. Alice Boyes, in her useful new book, *The Healthy Mind Toolkit*, describes her realization that she needs both self-confidence and self-doubt to do her best work. A little self-doubt can keep you humble enough to realize you may need to learn more or work harder at something. It may even give you the dogged determination to keep going and "show people what you're made of." Doubt, according to Boyes, "causes us to question what we're doing, mentally prepares us to accept change, propels us to work harder or differently, and can lead to us taking more cooperative approaches in dealing with people who disagree with us."

I love this reminder that your feelings of confidence will ebb and flow during the course of a day—or a lifetime—and that this fluctuation is normal. Not to worry!

2. Show compassion toward your Future Self. Caring for your Future Self could involve actions as small as filling up your gas tank this afternoon because you have a busy morning tomorrow and as far-sighted as exercising now for better health as you age. "I may not want to exercise," you could say to yourself, "But my Future Self sure would appreciate it." In this blog ([link is external](#)), habits guru Leo Babauta points out that people who don't procrastinate are also likely to be people who want their Future Selves to be happy. Can you decide to be one of them?

3. Practice compassionate and realistic self-talk. Being able to realize when you are suffering, to comfort yourself, and to tell yourself that “tomorrow is another day,” will help you accept yourself even when you haven’t been able to handle yourself the way you would have preferred. Being supportive and kind to yourself when you have made mistakes will not only boost self-esteem; it will also boost your motivation and self-control, according to research cited by psychologist Kelly McGonigal in her book, *The Willpower Instinct*.

Some examples of compassionate self-talk:

- "It's true that you didn't do as well as you wanted on the talk, but given that you didn't feel well, you were a hero just to get through it."
- "Yes, you feel bad that you didn't say NO to your friend's request. Think of what you could say next time and put it in your mental file."
- "You don't have to be perfect."
- "Don't let it get you down. This too shall pass."

4. Relabel “failures” as setbacks, challenges, opportunities, or learning experiences. Relabeling “failures” as “challenges,” for example, will immediately lower the level of stress hormones in your body. How could you meet this latest “challenge?” Changing one word can initiate a cascade of problem-solving thoughts. Analyzing past mistakes and setbacks may also improve your future performance, according to this research ([link is external](#)). Strike the ugly f-word “failure” from your mental vocabulary list! Practice enough, and you will develop a “growth mindset,” as psychologist Carol Dweck calls it.

5. Don’t assume that other people know what you know. Own your expertise! This reminder is also from *The Healthy Mind Toolkit* by Alice Boyes. Do you know...the best places to find inexpensive clothing? Your city’s ordinances about trash, permits, and large-item pickups? The best restaurants for any occasion? Think about the times when people turn to you for information; your friends realize that you have numerous areas of expertise, both career-related and life-related.

6. Know your strengths. Think back on compliments and positive feedback from others. Notice how much you enjoy or dislike certain kinds of tasks. Take in the way you contributed to a situation and made it better. When you’ve had a success, mentally replay it again and again. Remembering and savoring positive feedback from others will help you internalize your strengths. Likewise, remembering other positive experiences will ingrain your special qualities into your brain. (Many readers have found this blog on “knowing yourself” a helpful way to focus on strengths.)

7. Remember your higher purpose and your meaningful values and goals. Reminding yourself of your most important values, goals, and life mission can give you more willpower, persistence, and self-confidence, according to considerable research. Your values keep you oriented to your “true north,” pointing to the core of who you are.

*Author Meg Selig - Psychology Today*

# RELATIONSHIP CORNER



## **Do common interests keep you together?**

Nope. No way. Not even close.

"Having common interests" is one of the relationship myths that "experts" spread around like wildfire. Kind of like "never go to bed angry" or "marriage is 50/50." With all due respect to your beloved Aunt Sharon, she's wrong. However, sharing common interests can be a great way to connect. If you can engage in, say, kayaking together in a positive way that you both enjoy, great! But if you end up arguing or criticizing each other about proper paddle strokes, then that just paves a road for resentment. So it's really about how you interact, not what you do together.

*Taken from The Gottman Institute - Marriage Minute*

## **Friendship Versus Fighting**

At the heart of the Seven Principles approach is the simple truth that happy marriages are based on a deep friendship. By this I mean a mutual respect for and enjoyment of each others company. These couples tend to know each other intimately- they are well versed in each others likes, dislikes, personality quirks, hopes and dreams. They have an abiding regard for each other and express fondness not just in the big ways but through small gestures day in and day out.

Friendship fuels the flames of romance because it offers the best protection against feeling adversarial toward your spouse.

*Taken from The Seven Principles for making a Marriage Work*

If you or someone you know is currently having relationship troubles or would like to get some more tips for improving a relationship please contact us today on 1300 019 230 to organise an appointment with one of our psychologists.



InPsyc *Psychology*

Dear Clients,

Please note that in line with our practice policy, as of the **1st of July 2018** there will be a small incremental fee increase in services.

**CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGIST**

**Individual Counselling Session:**

	<b>Cost</b>	<b>Medicare Rebate (With a Mental Health Care Plan)</b>	<b>Out of Pocket Expense</b>
<b>Full Fee</b>	\$190	\$124.50	\$65.50
<b>Concession Card Holder</b>	\$170	\$124.50	\$45.50
<b>Out of Hours (After 5pm)</b>	\$195	\$124.50	\$70.50

**GENERAL PSYCHOLOGIST**

**Individual Counselling Session:**

	<b>Cost</b>	<b>Medicare Rebate (With a Mental Health Care Plan)</b>	<b>Out of Pocket Expense</b>
<b>Full Fee</b>	\$150	\$84.80	\$65.20
<b>Concession Rate</b>	\$140	\$84.80	\$55.20
<b>Out of Hours (After 5pm)</b>	\$160	\$84.80	\$75.20

If there are any problems, please feel free to call the clinic to discuss.

Kind Regards

InPsyc Psychology

# WHATS ON IN JUNE?

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## INTERNATIONAL MEN'S HEALTH WEEK

All this emphasis on the health of boys and men - what's that about? They're alright, aren't they?

In many cases, the answer is no.

A boy born in Australia in 2010 has a life expectancy of 78.0 years while a baby girl born at the same time could expect to live to 82.3 years old. Right from the start, boys suffer more illness, more accidents and die earlier than their female counterparts.

Men take their own lives at four times the rate of women (that's five men a day, on average). Accidents, cancer and heart disease all account for the majority of male deaths.

## NATIONAL BUDDY DAY

Every June we hold National Buddy Day, a day where we encourage primary schools across Australia to 'Band Together' with a buddy. National Buddy Day is an initiative developed by NAB and the Alannah & Madeline Foundation to celebrate friendship and help raise awareness of bullying in Australian primary schools.

## RED NOSE DAY

Annually, 3,200 Australian families experience the sudden and unexpected death of a baby or child. This has to stop. Through world-class research, advocacy and education we passionately believe we can put an end to this.

Red Nose relies on the generosity of the community through Red Nose Day and other fundraising events, and our partnerships with small businesses and corporations. Our Grief and Loss services and Indigenous programs are partly funded by Commonwealth and State Governments.