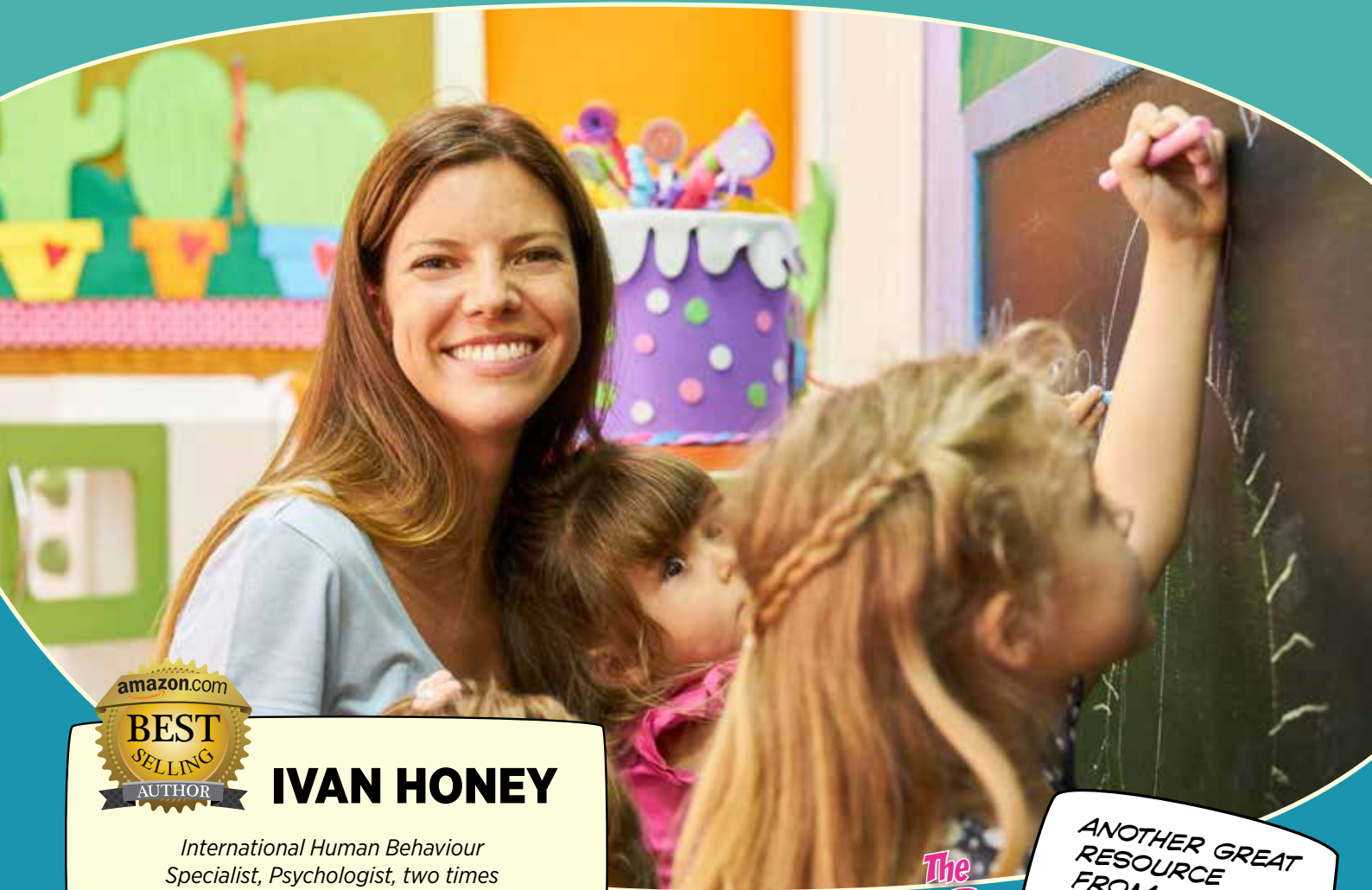


# STRATEGIES FOR CREATING THE SELF-MANAGING CLASSROOM



*EMPOWERING YOUR STUDENTS AND  
TRANSFORMING YOUR TEACHING EXPERIENCE*



**IVAN HONEY**

*International Human Behaviour  
Specialist, Psychologist, two times  
#1 Amazon Bestselling Author and founder  
of The Get Happier Project*



**www.gethappier.net**

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***This book is dedicated to all those wonderful teachers who continue to make a real difference in the lives of their students every day.***

***This new resource gives you practical tools to make classroom management more effective and fun, while teaching students the skills for a successful life.***

***A special thanks to my mentor, Dr William Glasser and my many Choice Theory/Lead Management colleagues around the world.***



***I am especially grateful to our two specialist contributors to this book, Garry Garnaut and Linda Fothergill, and our talented editor, artist and designer, Jacqui Lynch.***

Strategies For Creating the Self-Managing Classroom: Empowering your Students and Transforming your Teaching Experience

First published in 2023 by:

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P.O. BOX 126 Strathfieldsaye, Victoria, 3551, Australia

Ph: +61 03 5439 5551 Website: [www.gethappier.net](http://www.gethappier.net)

Email: [ivan@ivanhoney.com](mailto:ivan@ivanhoney.com)

Illustrations by Jacqui Lynch, Preloaded Design and Mat Jones.

Book Design: Jacqui Lynch, Preloaded Design

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Where notated you may print posters for your personal use.

This book is not intended to provide specific advice or replace professional intervention. It will give a general set of guidelines for effective classroom management based on the Get Happier School program.



*Welcome to*

# STRATEGIES FOR CREATING THE SELF-MANAGING CLASSROOM

*EMPOWERING YOUR STUDENTS AND  
TRANSFORMING YOUR TEACHING EXPERIENCE*



*What we accomplish by **threats** and **rewards** must be maintained  
by **force** or by more **rewards**.*

*What we accomplish through **skillful** coaching and **true kindness**  
is **self-propelling**.*

*Therefore, **real power** consists in creating a situation  
where it need not be exercised.*

*Anon*

# ENDORSEMENTS

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***In this inspiring text, teachers will readily understand how to build a culture of self-management in their classrooms.***

***They will learn how to help students to understand themselves, show respect for themselves and others, and negotiate their way through challenges, all without the need for coercion and manipulation.***

Sylvia Habel  
Associate Lecturer in Inclusive and Specialised Education  
College of Education, Psychology and Social Work  
Flinders University.

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***This book has come at a pivotal time after the challenges of COVID-19, and its effect on our students's ability to focus, concentrate and feel comfortable in face-to-face learning.***

***By developing collaboratively agreed boundaries and using emotionally intelligent management strategies, a safe learning environment is created for students to freely explore and learn from their mistakes.***

***You will find that the information in this book is real and affirming, providing the language and skills to thrive in the classroom, and work effectively with challenging student behaviours.***

***As a result you will enjoy a more harmonious self-managing classroom culture, while at the same time developing responsible and independent learners.***

***Summary: A must-have manual to ensure you will live a healthier life both in and outside of your teaching role. This book affirms your professional skills and provides clear guidance as you build a positive classroom of engaged, independent learners.***

Mr Jim Cowie  
Nexus Academic Adviser for Master of Teaching (Secondary)  
Faculty of Education. La Trobe University, Victoria.

# THREE STORIES: SKILLFUL COACHING AND MANAGEMENT

---

## ① I just watched my favourite football team win the grand final.

The ability of all the team members to work together to achieve their goal was inspiring.

The coach had worked so effectively to create a winning team culture.

Each team member knew their role and was totally committed to success.

If there was a problem, everyone was there to help however they could.

One of the best players in this game had been thrown out of his old team last year in disgrace.

But, somehow, the new coach had worked out how to get the best out of him.

*'How did you get such commitment?'* I asked.

He replied, *'No-one is better than anyone else. So we support everyone with what they need at the time and make sure that this is a great place to be.'*

*'We have to be real,'* he said. *'There is no space here for pretending, or doing a low quality job. There are team rules and everyone is happy to follow them.'*

*'We don't get quality by using rewards and punishments. We aim for commitment, not compliance'*

I asked a question that had been at the back of my mind. *'What did you do when you lost that important game two weeks ago?'*

The coach smiled. *'We didn't let it get to us or blame each other'* he said. *'We just asked ourselves, What happened? Why? and What are we going to do about it?'* And that's why we won the Grand final'

Later, I heard the new team member being interviewed and he was asked what made the difference for him. *'The team accepted and trusted me as I was, they let me be myself,'* he said. *"But I learnt that for me to be my best, I needed to work with the team, not just for myself."*



## ② Sometime later, I watched an orchestra work together to perform a magnificent piece of music.

Many different instruments combined in a unique way to create a harmonious symphony.

The conductor knew every musician and was able to bring the best out of each player.

It was magical how all the different melodies combined to create a memorable performance.

The conductor told me about the young woman who had just performed a brilliant solo piece on the bass guitar.

She had severe learning problems and had failed badly in school, but her best friend brought her along.

The conductor and the whole orchestra had coached her and she had discovered that she loved the bass guitar.

Since then, her progress had been dramatic.

I then asked the conductor; *'What is your secret to this wonderful sound?'*

She replied, *'Every person is equally important. If one person is out of tune, the whole piece is compromised. So everyone supports each other to be their best.'*





### 3 The next day I visited a classroom.

The students were waiting at the door, clamouring to get in.

I watched them in the classroom. There was energy, noise and excitement, interspersed with periods of quiet work and reflection.

They listened attentively to the teacher, worked together co-operatively, and everyone related positively to each other.

There was music. The teacher knew every student, treated each one with respect, and was able to bring out their unique strengths.

Two students new to the class began to fight.

She managed the conflict calmly by just by asking them a few questions, and getting some of the other students to help. One of the students was so upset that he needed some space to cool off on a comfortable chair in the reading corner.

I asked her, *'Was it always like this?'*

She replied, *'No'*

I was curious. *'What did you do?'* I asked.

*'I know that all my students want to be happy,' she replied, 'So they learn that happiness is doing what you love, enjoying challenges, working together in harmony, being creative, and having lots of fun! Every day, we improve our skills to get happier. A happy classroom is a productive classroom.'*

*'What else do you do?'* I enquired.

*'Well, I keep myself calm. If there are challenges, I ask, 'What can I do to help? or 'What can you do to get happier right now?'*

*'It's all about improvement, not perfection.'*



## What does a successful coach, conductor, teacher and leader have in common?

They are:

- balanced and grounded in reality,
- focused on their goals,
- understand and care for people,
- love what they do,
- able to recognise and manage conflict constructively,
- operating on agreed boundaries,
- helping people learn the life skills for success.

## You are the coach. Your class is the team.

Think back to your own time as a primary school student.

- Who was your favourite teacher?
- What did they do that most inspired your respect, co-operation and engagement in learning?
- How did they manage conflict?
- What was different about this teacher compared to other teachers?
- Did they manage like a coach?

Coaching and management is a science as well as an art. In this book, you will have the opportunity to sharpen and extend your skills, and learn some new strategies for your classroom.

If you are already using the **Get Happier School Curriculum**, you will integrate the framework that your students are learning with strategies that build self-management skills.

### NOTE:

The engagement and quality of curriculum content and delivery cannot be separated from our management processes. However, this book mostly assumes that your curriculum content and delivery is engaging and effective, and focuses largely on management strategies to build a self-managing classroom.

# STUDY GUIDE

## Questions and Activities for Discussion and Practice

### Part One: Three short stories.

These are the type of stories you might read in the newspaper or online in human interest, sport or business columns.

If you are working through this book with the team, these stories will promote some great discussion.

Questions and Activities:

1. What are the main themes of the stories?
2. Which story did you find most impactful and why?
3. Create a list of the strategies and mindsets used by effective coaches and managers.
4. Share your own story with the team about a successful behavioural intervention you had with a challenging student, and why it worked.
5. Are there any ideas that you can already begin to apply to your management practice?



# MANAGING BEHAVIOUR IN THE CLASSROOM

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**Welcome to this unique set of behaviour management resources and coaching strategies, to support all teachers, especially those who are implementing the Get Happier School program.**

Some of the strategies are linked directly to the program: books, stories, pictures, posters, games, card sets, and lesson plans. However, most strategies can be used by anyone.

The **Get Happier School** program focuses on the key themes of co-operation, being in control of your life, and getting happier. The program provides a powerful and intrinsic motivation for self-regulated behaviour and co-operation. It also teaches the skills required for successful self management.

But, if we expect students to manage their behaviour, co-operative skills need to be taught like any other school subject. Ineffective behaviour is the result of a deficit in skill or knowledge.

Students **can** learn to regulate their behaviour and make good choices without constant supervision or external rewards and punishments.

However, within the daily challenges of the classroom, how do we best manage student behaviour to achieve the desired outcomes? **How can we discover strategies consistent with what we are teaching the students?**

When used in conjunction with the **Get Happier School** program, the ideas in this book will enable you to use the familiar 'Dragster' language to help students solve their problems. Everyone learns the questions and processes that assist self-evaluation of choices and actions.



And at the same time, we are preparing students for a successful and resilient life. The concepts, images and the skills for wellbeing are embedded within the culture, language and practice of the whole school community.

As teachers, we will experience more enjoyable, relaxed, and happy classrooms, where students want to co-operate, and where we always want the best for each other. Of course, students will sometimes make mistakes, and so will we. Accepting this reality enables us to see behavioural mistakes not as oppositional and directed personally at us, but as opportunities to learn more effective behaviours that will serve us well in the classroom and in life.

**I wish you well as you use the ideas in this book to help make your classroom more peaceful, where students enjoy their learning and can more easily achieve their potential.**



# WHAT'S IN THIS BOOK?

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This book is about managing conflict and creating a co-operative classroom, with hundreds of fun strategies for developing independent and responsible learners. As you read the book, you can choose your best strategies and integrate them into your classroom management approach.

This book is not a quick fix but a structured and thoughtful process based on understanding the key principles of human behaviour and effective learning. When sustained over time, you will experience excellent outcomes for yourself, your school, and your students.

You can use the ideas any time to move towards more effective classroom management.

**Chapter 1** sets the scene for the whole book with a simple description and discussion of self-management, and compares the Get Happier Management approach to other management styles. It concludes with the 12 key principles of the Get Happier approach.

**Chapter 2** identifies some simple and practical psychological strategies to reduce stress and maintain personal balance. It is all about looking after yourself and managing yourself effectively.

**Chapters 3 to 7** share many unique and individual strategies to effectively manage behaviour using the learning and visual resources of the Get Happier School project. These resources are already in your school and can be adapted across all grades. If you are not in a Get Happier School, you can access the resources from the shop at [www.gethappier.net](http://www.gethappier.net)

Used as a whole school approach, these strategies come together over the seven years of primary schooling to manage conflict and help create a kind, positive, and effective learning culture.

**Chapter 8** provides many tips and strategies for behaviour management success from two skilled and experienced school management professionals. You will discover many great ideas in this section.

**Chapter 9: The Appendix** considers the challenges and the potential harm that results from over using praise and external rewards. It also helps clarify the difference between the use of punishment and logical consequences. You can then be clear about which behavioural strategies can make a positive and lasting difference.

## **Important note:**

There will always be some non-negotiables within the classroom and school that reflect the need for health and safety. In the same way, there are non-negotiables for us when driving on the highway or interacting with others. Our society has criminal laws and consequences if such non-negotiables are violated.

These externally imposed conditions can be taught in such a way that students understand that rules and laws exist for our well-being.

However, external control approaches such as reward and punishment can interfere with learning the skills required to be happy, responsible and independent. Therefore, this book provides practical strategies to help students learn the social skills needed to resolve conflict in a non-coercive, kind, educational, and peaceful way.

***“Too often we forget that discipline really means to teach not to punish. A disciple is a student, not a recipient of behavioural consequences.”*** Dr Dan Segal.

## Some ideas for reading and applying the strategies in this book

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- I encourage you to read the book from front to back, taking notes in a journal or on your computer as you go.
- Set aside a period of time, every day or week, to read a certain portion of the book. It might be a few pages or a chapter.
- As you read the book carefully, you may find that a particular sentence affirms or challenges your thinking. Highlight or underline the sentence and discuss it with your colleagues and friends. If you find it enlightening or helpful, develop a small plan to take action.
- The most powerful way to learn and action the ideas is to implement them. Set a small, realistic goal after every reading, write it down, action it, and then review it. Remember, we are not looking for perfection but for learning, and we know that it will take several attempts to improve any skill. The focus is on effort and improvement.
- When you lose focus occasionally, be gentle with yourself and then return to the task at hand.
- It always helps to have a learning buddy, so you can encourage each other as you learn and practice the skills for managing conflict.
- Within your school or team, form a book club dedicated to discussing and sharing the information in the book to reduce stress and enjoy teaching more.
- For the school staff, allocate one session a fortnight or month to work in small teams to read the book in small sections and then to share the ideas with the staff as a whole group. This is a fun and co-operative process for everyone, to discover and share some powerful ideas for classroom management. Organise food for the groups, encourage fun, and create virtual options for those who can't attend in person. Ensure every group has a note taker and that the results are documented and shared with all staff members.
- It's often been said, *'If nothing changes, nothing changes!'* When we create a safe and supportive environment with team members, they will be willing to try different ideas and strategies.
- Acknowledge challenges, but always identify and focus on successes in applying the ideas. This helps create the energy required to maintain, build, and support the change process. Change does not happen overnight but is a process, as outlined on page 32 of this book.

***Classroom management is not about having the right rules...  
... it's about having the right relationships.***

@Steele Thoughts

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# A HAPPIER WAY TO MANAGE YOUR CLASSROOM



***To focus on discipline is to ignore the real problem:  
We will never be able to get students (or anyone else) to be  
in good order if, day after day, we try to force them to do  
what they do not find satisfying.***

William Glasser M.D

***The more a person perceives that they are loved, the less  
they will interfere with the lives of others.***

William Glasser M.D



# CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT: THE BIG PICTURE

## Successful Managers Always Use The Open Roads!

**The Get Happier School**  
DOUG DRAGSTER™

Which road will you choose?

**OPEN ROADS**

- **ACCEPTING**
- **NEGOTIATING**
- **LISTENING**
- **ENCOURAGING**
- **RESPECTING**
- **SUPPORTING**
- **TRUSTING**

**DEAD END ROADS**

- BLAMING**
- CRITICISING**
- PUNISHING**
- BRIBING**
- COMPLAINING**
- NAGGING**
- THREATENING**

★ [www.gethappier.net](http://www.gethappier.net) ★

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[Download Open and Dead End Poster here.](#)

# MINDSETS FOR EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT

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*Most serious conflicts evolve from our attempts to control others who will not accept our control, because what we want does not satisfy them.*

William Glasser M.D.

## Management: Over Control, Under Control Or Self Control!

This book will not offer a quick fix or a set of manipulative tricks to create compliance. Instead, you will be invited to enjoy being your best authentic self and to engage with your students about how to 'Get Happier' and solve problems. We will provide you with many strategies to assist you to develop best practice for achieving quality outcomes.

Management is an art as well as a science. But, is management in the classroom simply about compliance, or is it about helping students become engaged team players and creative problem-solvers in all areas of learning?

**Before we talk about strategies, let's begin by making sure that we understand the underlying management principles that successful classroom teachers have in common.**

Many approaches to classroom management will work.

But do you simply want to settle for compliant students, or do you want to develop a quality team of self-motivated and self-managing students?

**It's your choice.**

But it is important to know that when you just settle for compliance, both you and the students will pay a price.

So, let's explore the **underlying behaviours and mindsets** that are part of the compliant classroom and compare this to the self-managing classroom.

# THE DEAD END ROADS MINDSET

---

Compliance can be achieved by using the Dead End Road behaviours, but in the process, you will be creating a learning environment that does not maximise learning, co-operation and quality.

In this section I will explore some of the harmful outcomes of using the Dead End Road behaviours of **Bribing** (also referred to as **rewarding to control**), and **Punishment**.

Many of us have been conditioned to believe that the old punishment and reward system is the key to engaging and controlling students. While punishments are now less obvious, a system based on externally obtained rewards is commonplace.

Advocates of this old system continue to tell me that it works. And it may work temporarily if you are offering a person something they value. However, as a long term strategy, there are problems, particularly if the student does not see value in what they are being rewarded with. They co-operate because of the reward, but may not ever develop the intrinsic satisfaction of developing independence, real skills and personal responsibility.

Have you been in classrooms where:

- some students are praised for their deeds, while others sat in quiet resentment, knowing that deep down they had done equally well but were not recognised?
- other students sat in passive boredom, thinking about something else?
- others were developing a deep resistance to what they saw as a method of control, and to the standards they could never expect to achieve?
- behaviour is perceived as a type of competitive sport where winners are rewarded and losers are ignored?

So, while rewards and praise will ensure compliance and co-operation from some students in the short term, there are numerous downsides, and the long term effects are quite harmful. **Using excessive or insincere praise with students is an example of rewarding to control.** Children who experience excessive praise often develop a sense of entitlement, and come to believe that they are better than others and therefore should always be first and the most important. These children may come to believe they must be the best all the time, and as a result they struggle with the pressure of their own elevated and unrealistic expectations.

When we rely on rewards and praise to manage behaviour, students can become vulnerable to manipulation, peer pressure and social media, as they seek to please anyone who provides praise and rewards. Teaching students to think for themselves and make responsible and safe choices prepares them to manage threats, abuse, and the negative influence of much social media. Sadly, the current mental health crisis is fuelled by so many people believing that having a good life is all about pleasing others: a lesson learnt as they were conditioned to believe that their value was measured by the good opinion of others.

Did you know that research studies demonstrate that when students are bribed or rewarded for behaviour, it deprives them of experiencing the inherent rewards of the activity or behaviour itself? The reward implies to students that the activity is unpleasant or of little value, thus making it less likely that they will do it without a prize attached.

Reward dependence is characterised by a tendency toward dependence on signals of reward, especially verbal signals of social approval and social support.

Results of studies also show that the values of reward dependence are correlated with depressive mood.

When we attempt to control behaviour through reward and punishment, it often results in resentment, active or passive resistance or unwilling compliance based on fear or a desire to please. As a result, we interfere with the development of independent personal self-management skills. This will likely result in a lot of extra work for the teacher who takes full responsibility for attempting to control or coerce students, potentially creating a negative, dependant, restrictive, reactive or disengaged classroom culture.

Do we really believe that a few quick rewards or punishments or manipulative tricks will immediately turn an emotionally disturbed, angry or traumatised student into a compliant learner? Of course not!

In addition, we know that young people model the behaviours of adults. When we use the controlling Dead End Road behaviours, our students are likely to exhibit the same behaviours of seeking to control or manipulate others, thus creating additional conflict that we will need to manage!

Finally, as you will see on the management chart on page 12, the Dead End Road habits are the direct result of a common psychology based on the belief that we can and must control others. The belief in External Control psychology results in Dead End Road habits that are harmful to relationships and quality outcomes, and is the source of much human misery.

In families, schools, communities and around the world, these behaviours are extremely common. Most of us were raised as children by well meaning adults who used these behaviours to try and manage us, and we all still use these behaviours from time to time. The harmful self-talk that we have developed derives from these habits: self-criticism, self-blame, complaining and nagging at ourselves, can be interspersed with self-sabotaging, punishing, arrogance or conceit. These habits can easily result in some mental ill-health.

Whenever we are unhappy, we will be able to identify the particular habit that is creating our misery.

Whenever we are struggling with our management strategies, we will be able to identify the habit which is making things worse.

**Appendix 1** explains the ineffectiveness of a system based on rewards, excessive praise and punishment. It explains an alternative approach based on kindness, encouragement, and natural consequences.





# THE SELF MANAGING CLASSROOM: THE OPEN ROADS MINDSET

---

So, what is the antidote for the old set of habits represented by the Dead End Roads?

When we teach and manage our classroom by using the Open Road habits, we reinforce responsible and independent behaviour. Based on Internal Control psychology, everyone understands that they are responsible for their behaviour and happiness, and they learn the mindsets and skills for resilience, self-regulation and mental health.

**Responsible behaviour is no longer dependent on either the promise of rewards or the fear of punishment.**

Students use independent and responsible behaviours because they understand that this will add to their own happiness and the wellbeing of others.

As teachers, we are then able to help our students self-manage by asking questions such as:

***Are you on a Dead End Road?***

***Which one?***

***Which Open Road will work better?***

***What can you do right now to get on the Open Road?***

***'Would you rather Blame, Complain, Criticise, Punish, etc, OR would you rather work it out, negotiate a solution, be kind to yourself or get stronger?'***

You will discover many management strategies, questions and resources using the Open Road metaphor in Chapters 3 to 7.

At the most basic level, we are talking about internalising and using the seven Open Road behaviours, which build self-esteem and genuine relationships. Only as our children understand that these behaviours will lead to greater happiness will they become willing to give up the seven Dead End Road behaviours that lead to misery. As this happens, responsible behaviours become the accepted norm.

As we move towards effective student self-management, it is essential to develop and maintain clear boundaries around safety and other specific behaviours that enhance learning. The main difference when using the Get Happier approach is in how we achieve these outcomes. Wherever possible, we avoid external coercive, shaming or manipulative management approaches and deliberately teach responsible, independent, self-managing behaviours that are intrinsically satisfying.

There is always a transition period where the teacher gradually builds the skills and competency of the children to self-manage their behaviour. As with any change, it does not happen overnight. If we attempt to force it, it will create confusion and resentment.

Our management strategies will be built on kindness, compassion, genuine relationships, and a focus on empowering students to take responsibility for their own lives, rather than doing things to or for the student.

But there are also many pitfalls when we interpret the Open Road behaviours as simply being 'kind.'

# WHAT IS KINDNESS?

---



*It is no kindness to treat unhappy people as helpless, hopeless, or inadequate, no matter what has happened to them. Kindness is having faith in the truth and that people can handle it and use it for their benefit. True compassion is helping people help themselves.*

William Glasser M.D., Choice Theory:  
A New Psychology of Personal Freedom

This quote by Dr Glasser is powerful. Being kind is often understood to mean doing 'nice' things for others, taking responsibility for them or 'rescuing' them. Of course, in extreme or dire situations, such as when a student is in physical danger, such actions are necessary.

But generally, taking responsibility and compulsive rescuing or 'fixing' of others is the opposite to kindness. We create dependency and actually disempower the other person when we do not use the situation to teach the skills that empower them to help themselves. It has been said, **'Never do for a student what the student can do for themselves'**. Check out this amazing video to see what can happen when we help someone to help themselves. Watch Kyle Maynard's story, an inspiring real life account of a young man who has overcome extreme adversity.

[Watch Kyle's Video Here](#)

Dependency frequently results in the recipient developing a sense of entitlement or of being a victim. Trying to 'fix' others without helping them develop the skills to 'fix' themselves may give us a temporary sense of influence, but in the long term, it is likely to reinforce helplessness. In addition, trying to be responsible for others will inevitably lead us to overload or burnout!

The first step to genuine compassion or kindness is to return to the **Open Road** (check the cards sets!) behaviours and mindsets, and by asking ourselves a key question:

***Will my actions empower myself or others with the skills and mindsets to become stronger and more confident?***

Always relate to others as if they have a choice, and the capacity to choose different options. Ask questions such as:

- ***What do you think your next step is here?***
- ***What choice will help you most right now?***
- ***How do you think this will work?***
- ***What might someone you admire do here?***
- ***Knowing the truth of this situation, what do you think will work best for you now?***

With these questions, we convey trust and belief that the student is competent and capable of helping themselves to solve their problems effectively.

## **We can only manage our classrooms effectively when we manage ourselves effectively.**

To achieve this, we must let go of our desire to rescue, over control, look good to others, or be less than our best, authentic selves. This book is designed to help you to fine-tune the ways you best help yourself and others.

To enjoy, appreciate and be yourself is always the first aspect of successful classroom management. We cannot manage others if we cannot manage ourselves. To do this, we must use the Open Roads on ourselves. Encouraging, supporting, respecting, trusting and accepting ourselves is a lifetime's work. It is also the essence of kindness and creating a good life.

**You can start by downloading the Open and Dead End Roads poster and put it on the wall as a reminder to be kind to yourself!**

**You will discover the empowering affirmations for the Open Roads in Doug Dragster's Get Happier Toolbox.**

I give this poster to every client I see. I know that they are unhappy because they are using the Dead End Roads to attempt to control someone else, OR they are using the Dead End Roads self-talk on themselves. They are self-critical, blaming themselves or complaining. So, I will suggest that rather than trying to control others, that they focus on the one person they can control: themselves! As they begin to use the affirmations and language of the Open Roads, they become happier, and their relationships improve.

**A helpful framework and practical strategies for personal self-management are to be found in Chapter 2.**

Paradoxically, when you relinquish trying to control the uncontrollable (i.e. your students), you will be empowered to exert more significant influence over others than you may have thought possible. When others recognise that you are not trying to control them, they do not need to rebel against such control. They feel safe enough to want to co-operate, learn and grow.

People say to me, 'But this is hard! When I feel sad for someone in my care, I feel terrible! I feel that I must do something to help!

Working on developing our emotional boundaries doesn't mean that we can't have compassion for another's pain or sadness. It just means that we don't take on their pain or sadness as our responsibility to fix or solve.

In fact, we need to get ourselves balanced and centred so we can determine the most effective way to 'help the person help themselves!' This book is filled with many strategies and questions to help you do this.

Genuine kindness to ourselves and others and building meaningful relationships is the key to change. Being my best self, I can remove the urge to control or 'fix' others. To do this in a kind, balanced and reflective way will bring us the satisfaction of a peaceful and meaningful life and vocation. When we are kind to ourselves and others, we create a safe and productive learning space where students are keen to learn, and there is minimal resistance.

# WHAT IS SELF-MANAGEMENT AND WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

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***Self-management is the ability to effectively manage one's emotions, thoughts, and behaviours in different situations and achieve goals and aspirations.***

Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL)

You may also hear **self-management** referred to as **self-regulation**. Your ability to self regulate will determine your success and happiness in life. If you cannot manage your feelings, you will be unable to manage your life.

Self-management skills will assist any learner to appropriately express and manage feelings, control their behaviour, create plans to solve problems and become responsible and independent learners.

These are all essential traits for academic success. Research shows that teaching self-management can increase academic performance by 11 percentile points!

Imagine a whole classroom of students who practice appropriate self-management! When students self-manage individually and as a group, the flow and feel of the classroom is more relaxed and productive.

Understanding yourself and others and using this knowledge to make yourself happier and more effective is what students learn in the Get Happier School program. And these are skills that will serve them for a lifetime!

The Get Happier School Program was designed to teach students the skills and mindsets to thrive and achieve wellbeing and mental health.

**However, this e-book is especially for you as teachers, so you can seamlessly integrate the Get Happier resources, and the games, stories and activities into the everyday management of your classroom.**

As well as teaching the Social and Emotional learning curriculum, the program and resources will provide you with the language and strategies to improve your effectiveness and happiness in your role. And because it is a whole school program, the themes and language are understood and practised across the whole school community.

**So, have fun making a real difference in your classroom, and keep sharing your learnings with your colleagues!**

# THREE MANAGEMENT STYLES.

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## 1. Boss Management

Some organisations try to get compliance using the '**Boss Management**' approach, by either rewarding or punishing subordinates. External control psychology is the driver of this approach. When a teacher believes they know what is best for everyone and are responsible for enforcing expectations and values, they can justify manipulative or controlling behaviours towards their students. This is particularly cruel when students are developmentally or socially unready to understand or respond to teacher requirements. They are inadvertently punished due to their lack of knowledge or skill, and are left confused or anxious.

For example, Dr Pamela Snow's research on the effect of language disorder, demonstrates that many students do not have the capacity to understand and use language at the expected level. Understandably, up to 50% of youth criminal offenders have this profile. Frequently, a student's inadequate receptive or expressive language skills result in misunderstanding, confusion or an incapacity to communicate clearly. This can be masked when a Boss manager uses the 'benevolent dictator' role, manipulating students with insincere praise, rewards, guilting and other manipulative techniques. Controlling others is the focus, often based on fear of student disagreement or resistance.

## 2. Permissive Management

At the other extreme is a '**Permissive**' approach to behaviour management. This often means freedom without responsibility. In the absence of clear boundaries and structure, students are permitted to do what they want to do even if it interferes with the rights of others. Without guidance and agreed clear boundaries, most students struggle to learn.

## 3. Get Happier Management

Fortunately, there is another choice, and it is what I call '**Get Happier Management**'. Dr William Glasser refers to it as '**Lead Management**'. This is the approach taught in the **Get Happier School**, the way of kindness, authentic and genuine co-operation, and shared responsibility. Most of us were not taught how to do this, and many students now grow up in a world where they may see few people in authority model these types of behaviours.

'**Get Happier Management**' requires us to identify the shared values that, at a fundamental level, are shared by everyone, and that are driven by our common basic needs. Getting agreement and 'buy-in' from the students and their families on these fundamental values is important. Schools using the Get Happier School program curriculum get buy-in by:

- using the Get Happier images on Facebook, newsletters and signs around the school
- referring parents to the family section of the website,
- providing parents with the free book, ***How to Raise Positive and Empowered Kids***
- teaching the Get Happier curriculum,
- using sustainable behaviour management approaches that teach the skills for self regulation,

- using Open Road behaviours and avoiding Dead End Roads when relating to students and parents,
- creating a culture of kindness and responsibility, always aimed at increasing happiness and well being.

Achieving buy-in will enable us to share the approaches to managing behaviour that are most likely to be effective and sustainable. Fortunately, we all know of many schools successfully moving from either 'Boss Management' or 'Permissive' approaches to the **'Get Happier Management'** approach.

The **Get Happier Management Chart** on the next page illustrates the three management styles, and the associated beliefs and behaviours of each management style.

## In Summary:

Managing classrooms using force, manipulation, or excessive praise will always invite confusion, resistance, and negativity, creating disconnection and reducing learning capacity. Equally, having unclear boundaries and being permissive will likely result in chaos and confusion and seriously impact learning outcomes. Both approaches are destructive to classroom culture and relationships.

In contrast, the **Get Happier Management** approach is about shared responsibility and co-operation. The **Get Happier School** program was developed to provide a structure to teach students the framework and skills to get happier (emotional intelligence) and in so doing, improve academic achievement and relationships. The program creates the conditions for a self-managing classroom by teaching students the skills to become independent, responsible and mentally healthy.

As teachers, we apply the same concepts to effectively manage our classroom dynamics and to constructively manage any conflict that arises.

**Students are engaged and are intrinsically motivated to choose co-operative behaviours, because they want to become a part of a happy and need satisfying team culture.**

When a student's self-esteem becomes dependent on external rewards and praise, their identity or sense of self can be easily lost.

***'Not to be cheered by praise, not to be grieved by blame, but to know thoroughly one's own virtues and powers are the characteristics of an excellent person.'***

Satchel Paige (Black American baseball great, and considered to be the best pitcher of all time)



# GET HAPPIER MANAGEMENT CHART

1

2

3

Psychology		
External Control Psychology	'Do What You Like' Psychology	The Psychology of Choice
Behaviour is caused by things and people outside of us	No clear understanding or awareness of behaviour	Behaviour is internal choice
Reward and punishment	Avoid, ignore and neglect	Relationship, influence and shared expectations
A quick fix	Too busy doing other things.	A sustainable focus on quality
<i>'I can and must control you' 'I'm the expert on you and I know best!'</i>	Very few expectations	<i>'I'll teach you how to meet your needs, without preventing others from meeting their needs'</i>

Chosen Behaviours		
Controlling behaviours (Dead End Roads)	Avoidant Behaviours	Connecting Behaviours (Open Roads)
Blaming	Ignoring	Listening
Criticising	Avoiding (Responsibility)	Supporting
Complaining	Avoiding (Accountability)	Encouraging
Rewarding to control	Avoiding (Ownership)	Negotiating
Threatening	Avoiding (Conflict)	Respecting
Punishing	Avoiding (Planning)	Accepting
Nagging	She'll be right mate!	Trusting

Management Styles		
BOSS Management	PERMISSIVE Management	GET HAPPIER Management
<i>'I'm in charge, so do what I say'</i>	<i>'Just do whatever you want'</i>	<i>'We are a team. Let's work this out together.'</i>
Focuses on compliance, motivation and control	Anything goes, no clear focus, no boundaries, avoids making decisions, head in the sand, not my problem	Focus on helping students learn the skills for a happy and responsible life
No freedom, no responsibility	Freedom without responsibility	Responsibility is shared by both teacher and student. Freedom within agreed boundaries
Rewards for compliance. Consequences or Punishment for non-compliance	No order or structure: Bullying or attention-getting students are in control.	Creating an environment where everyone can meet their needs. (safety and health, connection, empowerment, choices, and fun learning)
Driven by short term gains	No clear goals and everyone does their own thing	An effective team with clear goals, acceptance of team values and a kind process to manage conflict
<i>'Students are unpredictable so I must be in control at all times'</i>	<i>'I don't want students to be upset with me' 'I want them to like me'</i>	<i>'I have the confidence and knowledge to build relationships and coach for success'</i>

# THE GET HAPPIER APPROACH TO EFFECTIVE CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT: THE 15 KEY PRINCIPLES

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**We understand** that our students rarely score 100% on their first, second or even third attempts at learning something new. In learning maths or how to manage our lives optimally, we rarely achieve a perfect outcome immediately, if ever!

**We recognise** social learning to be an 'ongoing process' as we acquire the skills required for competence. So, as students move closer to developing effective relationship skills, we accept that they, like us, may need a number of lessons before mastering a task. So, we never focus on punishment or ideas of failure, but encourage every small positive attempt towards developing effective behaviours.

Dr John Gottman sought to discover the key factor in creating and sustaining successful relationships. His research showed that maintaining positive and sustainable relationships required a ratio of twenty encouraging and positive statements to one challenging statement. He calls this 'The magic ratio'. Use this knowledge with your students as they are learning the most essential skills in life, 'life skills'.

Along with many other practical strategies, this book will show you can use the cards and posters from the **Get Happier School Program**, **Doug Dragster's Get Happier Toolbox**, **Open Roads Thoughts to Get Happier** cards, and other **Get Happier** resources to build a great classroom culture, and at the same time provide the language, processes and strategies to manage behaviour.

The specific type of processes and questions suggested are for you to adapt to your style and the requirements of the situation. Always respect your unique strengths and style and be ready to adjust the strategies to who you are. They represent a problem-solving method reflecting the 12 Key Principles of the Get Happier programs.

As you begin to use the Get Happier system, you will discover, like all of us, that you will occasionally slip back into less effective behaviours. As we develop the **courage to be imperfect**, we can be patient and at peace with ourselves, recognise our mistakes, apologise if necessary and then take action to rebuild our relationship with the students. Students have told me that when a teacher has apologised to them, it actually improved their relationship with that teacher!

## Dangerous Behaviour

It is important to acknowledge that at times, you may have students in your class whose behaviour is dangerous and out of control.

On such occasions when a student's behaviour is a physical danger to themselves or others, the student may need to be excluded until such a time that a clear health and safety plan is developed and actioned. It will require some external specialist support for the student and their family, and for the teacher and school involved. No one has the skills to solve every problem in the world by themselves!

It is no kindness to the student to continue to tolerate dangerous and unsafe behaviour, especially when it comes at the expense of others whose health and safety may be placed at risk.

As that student gradually returns to the classroom, they will be welcomed by a kind, safe and relational culture where they can learn the skills for healthy relationships.

## The 15 Key Principles of the Get Happier Approach to Classroom Management

- 1.** A self-managing classroom is developed and sustained by intentionally creating a culture that minimises harmful stress, increases happiness, wellbeing and success, and improves relationships. Any successful team or group has:
  - A clear focus and goals,
  - An agreed acceptance of the team values and behavioural boundaries, and
  - A thoughtful and kind process to manage conflict.
- 2.** A whole school approach is most effective. Such an approach to effective classroom management involves:
  - Creating a safe, happy and satisfying learning environment
  - Group teaching, modelling and reinforcing the skills for self-management and happiness. (You are already doing this as you implement the Get Happier Curriculum.)
  - Using effective strategies to help students practice and internalise the skills and mindsets for self-management in everyday situations,
- 3.** As teachers, we are Lead Managers, and seek to create an environment where students can learn to become independent and responsible learners. As this happens, we develop a largely self-managing classroom, where ineffective behaviours are reduced and managed calmly and systematically.
- 4.** When students learn the skills for self-management, they are capable of being self-disciplined.
- 5.** We all make mistakes, and we are doing the best we can with what we know: To make mistakes is human and always provides an excellent opportunity to learn a better way.
- 6.** All students (and adults) have limited knowledge and skills because of factors such as their physical, emotional, cognitive and neurological development, differing personality styles and family and cultural backgrounds.
- 7.** Ineffective behaviours largely reflect a lack of skill or knowledge, so we must teach the skills and mindsets to get happier and solve problems. Prevention is better than cure.
- 8.** Some conflict is inevitable. If conflict is seen as an opportunity to learn how to get happier, it will be welcomed rather than resented or seen as a problem.
- 9.** Only win-win solutions to conflict are sustainable. These strategies are best applied in a safe, relaxed and supportive environment.
- 10.** Kindness and our ability to form effective relationships with others are essential to build happiness and a co-operative learning environment.

## The 15 Key Principles of the Get Happier Approach to Classroom Management

- 11.** When students learn to manage unhappy feelings by developing the skills and strategies to get happier, they can handle challenges with confidence, thus enhancing effective learning and wellbeing. These skills, which build self-awareness and emotional intelligence are essential, and are deliberately taught as part of some whole school programs, such as the Get Happier School Program.
- 12.** Understanding behaviour and creating a co-operative classroom environment will minimise the need for excessive control and stress.
- 13.** We all have the same universal needs. We aim to help students find constructive ways to meet these needs without hurting others or themselves.
- 14.** Happy, well-adjusted students will still make mistakes, but will not deliberately seek to harm others or themselves.
- 15.** Creating and delivering a flexible and differentiated curriculum is vital if we are to meet the individual needs of all students in the classroom. Many challenging behaviours are the result of disengagement from learning.

This book will focus mostly on the regular, daily strategies that you can use to manage your classroom to build self-management skills in your students.

***To focus on discipline is to ignore the real problem: We will never be able to get students (or anyone else) to be in good order if, day after day, we try to force or deceive them into doing what they do not find satisfying.***

William Glasser M.D., Choice Theory: A New Psychology of Personal Freedom

## STUDY GUIDE

### Questions and Activities for Discussion and Practice

#### Introduction and Chapter One

Remember the three stories at the beginning of the book? This chapter allows us to explore some reasons why those three leaders experienced success. Remember that strategies by themselves do not work unless they are part of a fundamental mindset which enables us to adapt the strategies to the specific needs of the situation we are in. What are your underlying assumptions and beliefs about managing in the classroom?

This section will give you the opportunity to get clear on the key principles behind effective management.

When we begin from a thoughtful, rational, and realistic mindset, everything begins to fall into place.

Without such a foundation, we are operating on reactive, trial and error approaches, and can easily lose our way, thus creating stress and uncertainty.

If you give yourself a little time to explore this section, you will be richly rewarded. There is nothing better than being clear about your goals in managing behaviour and having a simple framework which you can adjust to your own unique style.

#### Questions and Activities:

1. Discuss the definition of kindness. Do you agree or disagree? Why?
2. Have you downloaded the **Open and Dead End Road** chart and put it on the wall at home? Have you considered presenting these habits to the family as guidelines for getting along together?
3. What is your opinion of the comments about the **over use of praise and rewards**? This is quite a challenging concept for many kind hearted people. If you unsure about these ideas, you can explore them in detail in **Appendix One**.
4. Getting clear and intentional about our management style is important for success. Look at the chart on page 11, **The Links Between Beliefs, Behaviours and Management Styles** and discuss.
5. Review the 15 key principles of the Get Happier approach to classroom management on page 13 and 14. Read each one out aloud and discuss.



# THE SELF-MANAGING TEACHER: YOUR PERSONAL SURVIVAL CHECKLIST



***The only behaviour we can control is our own.***

William Glasser M.D

# THE SELF-MANAGING TEACHER: YOUR PERSONAL SURVIVAL CHECKLIST

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***'Helping students manage their emotions requires you to learn to manage yours first.'***

The Gottman Institute.

It is true to say that building a self-managing classroom will only be possible if we manage ourselves effectively.

Like everyone, we will have challenging days. A teacher I spoke to yesterday said she would happily work at the local hardware shop!

Burnout among teachers has always been high, but at present, it is higher than I've seen before.

So if you wish to remain in the teaching profession, it is wise to develop a range of protective strategies to reduce the risk of burnout or other serious illness.

Most importantly, we need to maintain our energy and focus to ensure our teaching is enjoyable and inspiring. Prioritising your self-care allows you to show up as your best self, and positively impact those around you.

## THE NEW MANAGEMENT APPROACH: BEGIN WITH SELF-MANAGEMENT

The strategies and ideas in this book emphasise genuine connection with students and being in charge of our behaviour. When the student perceives us as trying to control them, they often focus on reacting to us rather than learning. Understanding how our reactions, behaviours, and beliefs may unconsciously harm relationships and interfere with effective classroom management is the first step to success. Coercion, manipulation, and attempts to control others interfere with the learning process and create stress for us and the students.

**Self-management and self-awareness are the keys to managing others effectively.**

This encourages us to be authentic in our own lives. We learn a lot about ourselves as we manage and coach our students for a successful life. We all have unique challenges, but when we are involved in a meaningful career where we enjoy being ourselves, it enables us to be creative and live our best lives.

**The student's behaviour changes when our management approach changes. And this will always happen best when we are in a state of emotional and mental well-being.**

Then we can focus on discovering ways to help each student build their self-managing skills. When this is achieved, students are happier and more internally motivated to manage their learning and behaviour.

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# GET HAPPIER PSYCHOLOGY: A FRAMEWORK FOR SELF-MANAGEMENT

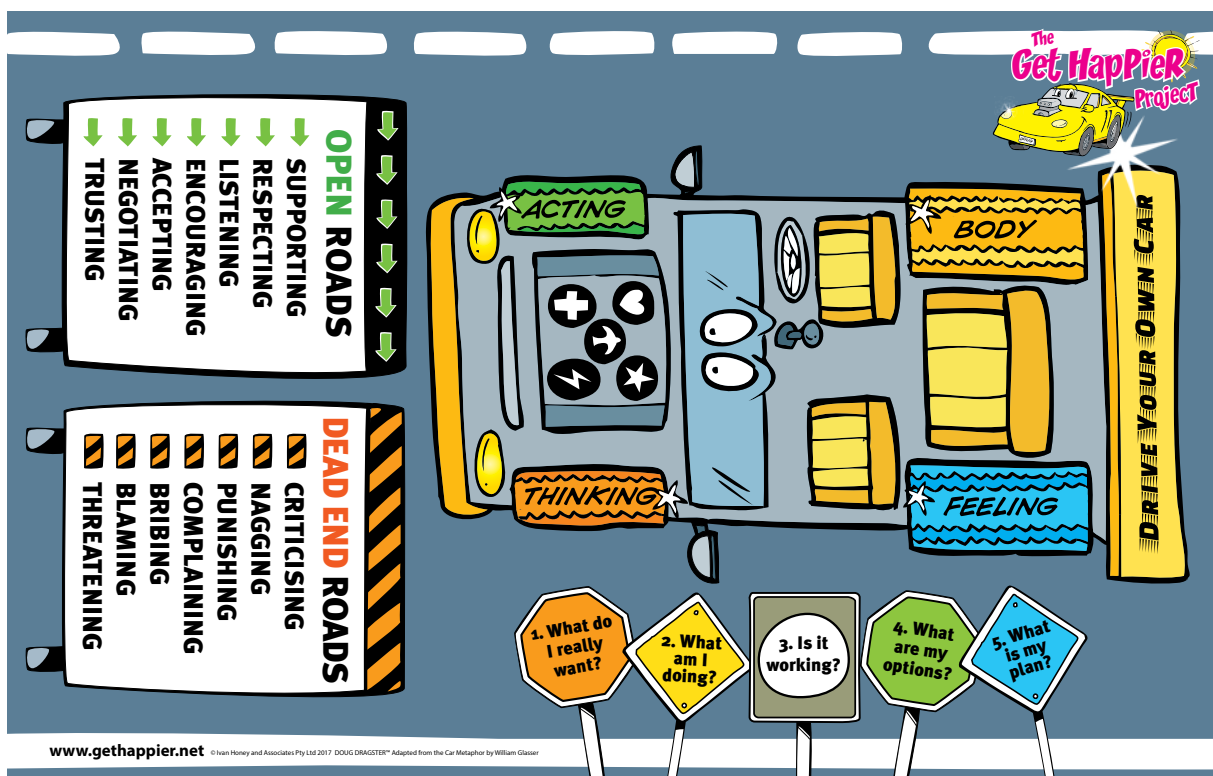
Unless we have some reasonably accurate understanding of ourselves, it is difficult to make the most optimal choices.

We will simply be acting as a victim of our conditioning, being triggered by random people and events in our environment, without awareness of the range of choices available to us.

The first section of this chapter provides a seven part model to understand our behaviour and thus to be able to respond to challenges thoughtfully and effectively.

This is evidence based psychology made easy, in a simple framework that you can begin to use today.

The Car Image is a Metaphor for Understanding Behaviour to Get Happier and Reduce Stress.

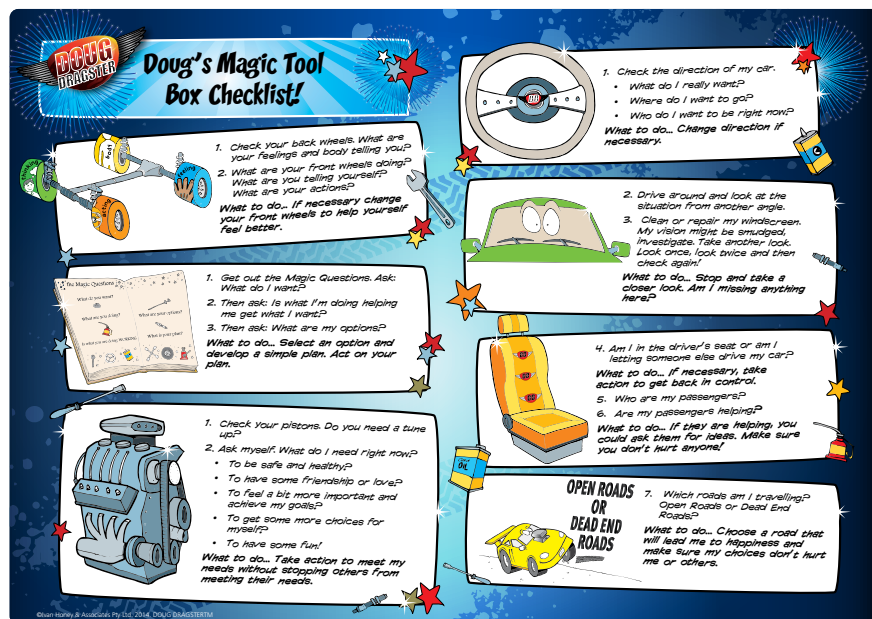


Following the work of Dr William Glasser and his 'Choice Theory', we use the metaphor of a car to simplify seven key psychological principles for self-management, optimal functioning, and problem solving. (To find more extensive questions and explanations of each component, check the best-selling ebook, **How to Raise Positive and Empowered Kids** and **Doug Dragster's Get Happier Toolbox** card set.)

Each of the car components below represent one aspect of human functioning, and together create a framework from which we can make adjustments to improve our well-being and happiness.

This knowledge enables us to face each new day with optimism and confidence, and even on the toughest of days, to know how to start our day over at any time.

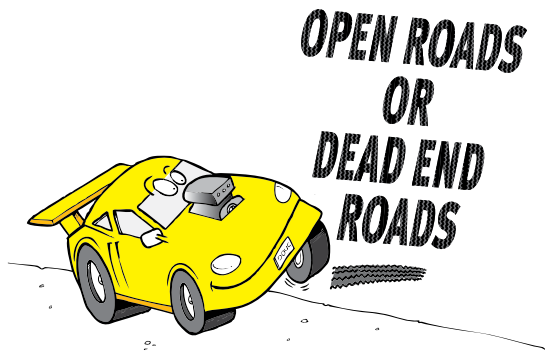
Here is **Doug's Magic Toolbox Checklist** and **Doug's Magic Manual**. They are posters from the subscriber area of the Get Happier Project website. [www.gethappier.net](http://www.gethappier.net) This is a summary of the program you teach the students in your classroom, which applies to them and to us! It is just a simple self-evaluation and action guide for dealing with challenging emotions. It was originally created for adults working in high-stress environments and has been adapted to the classroom. Use these questions as a process to guide you when confronting any challenge.



## The Open Road Behaviours: The Psychology of Happiness, Good Relationships, and Self Esteem

1. Which roads am I travelling? Open Roads or Dead End Roads?

*What to do... Choose a road that will lead me to happiness and make sure my choices don't hurt me or others.*



[Download Open and Dead End Poster here.](#)

Teaching and learning about the **Open Road** behaviours and how they will add to our happiness is fundamental to the Get Happier School program. Hopefully, most classrooms display these charts, which are referred to constantly.

However, you will notice that on all the charts, cards, and **Open Road** cards in the Toolbox, the focus is always on how we use these habits on ourselves.

Teaching the **Open Road** psychology of happiness and well-being is challenging if we are critical of



ourselves, blaming, nagging, punishing, complaining, bribing, and threatening ourselves.

On the other hand, when we accept ourselves, support, trust, respect, encourage, listen, and negotiate, we are sure to be happier.

This may sound too simple, but it is sometimes challenging. Developing and sustaining these habits takes time, but we know that if we want to get happier, this is one of the most important things we can do.

To develop the habit of using the affirming language of the open roads, study the affirmations on the **Open Road** cards in the Toolbox and the **Open Road Thoughts to Get Happier** cards and put them on the wall for easy reference.

Look closely at the seven Dead End Road habits. Do you have a favourite? Like many people, I am aware that having been subject to a lot of criticism by well meaning adults as a student, that I am inclined to travel the CRITICISING Road. This self-criticism can be disabling if we focus on it to a point where we begin to BLAME, NAG, or PUNISH ourselves. The antidote is to move onto the Open Roads of ENCOURAGING and ACCEPTING, and develop some new and realistic self talk.

What is your favourite Dead End Road, and what is your plan to get off it?

## The Driver's Seat: We are Responsible for our Choices

2. *Am I in the driver's seat or am I letting someone else drive my car? Am I trying to drive someone else's car?*

*What to do... If necessary, take action to get back in the driver's seat.*

3. *Who are my passengers?*

4. *Are my passengers helping?*

*What to do... If they are helping, you could ask them for ideas. Make sure you don't hurt anyone!*



The Driver's Seat is at the centre of The Get Happier School process. It requires us to answer the question: **'Do I want to take responsibility for my life?'**

Recognising that we are choosing most of our behaviour and that we are responsible for what we do is necessary if we want to live our best lives. When we blame others or subordinate to other powerful individuals, we are allowing them to control our lives. When we believe we have no choice, we allow ourselves to be victims of people and things outside of our control. Every time we complain, we make ourselves a victim.

As we begin to understand that we cannot control others and we can only control ourselves, it takes a lot of pressure off us. We also reduce the stress in our lives when we give up thinking that we can 'make' others do what we want.

Trying to drive another person's car (life) usually results in resistance or passive compliance, and harms the relationship.

If we want to influence others or feel good about ourselves, always go back to the **Open Road** behaviours.

Equally, we are more empowered when we stand up for ourselves and do not allow others to control us. We can only be responsible for ourselves. Making these choices will enable us to let go of the pressure we put on ourselves and give us the space to focus on what is important.

Choosing is an art, not a science. With choice comes responsibility. Dr Glasser defines responsibility as the ability to fulfill one's needs, and to do so in such a way that it does not deprive others of the ability to meet their needs.

Because none of us have a crystal ball to predict the future, many of our choices will be based on what we currently know and our best intuition at the time. Living in an unpredictable world requires a useful and accurate set of assumptions to negotiate the challenges. So, always trying to get things 'right' in an unpredictable world is quite unrealistic.

Our best option is always to work on being our best selves. Then we can never really lose.

**This understanding about choice and responsibility is essential if we want to be happy and in control.** Many unhappy people hold the disempowering belief that they have no choice, and use this to avoid doing anything to help themselves. This is a recipe for a miserable life.

The 'Driver's Seat' card in the **Supercharge Your Dragster** series provides some great questions for self-evaluation and empowerment.

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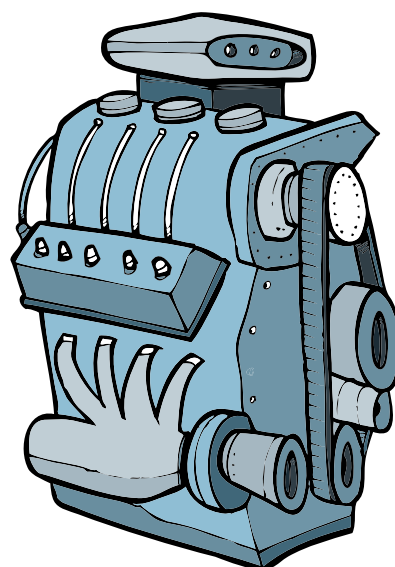
## The Engine: What are the Basic Human Needs?

5. *Check your pistons. Do you need a tune up?*

6. *Ask myself. What do I need right now?*

- *To be safe and healthy?*
- *To have some friendship or love?*
- *To feel a bit more important and achieve my goals?*
- *To get some more choices for myself?*
- *To have some fun!*

***What to do... Take action to meet my needs without stopping others from meeting their needs.***

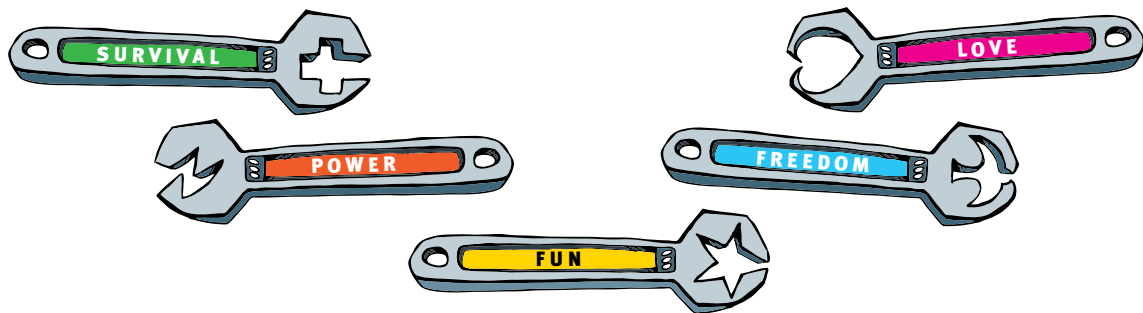


The metaphor of a car engine represents the human brain and the basic needs that drive our behaviour.

Because these needs are innate and non-negotiable, we have a right and responsibility to meet them.

Understanding this gives us an excellent tool for understanding and managing our lives.

Whenever we feel out of balance, one or more of our needs are not being met effectively. When we identify which needs are not being met, we can plan to meet them more efficiently and effectively.



Basic Needs				
Survival	Love and Belonging	Power	Freedom	Fun
Health	Belonging	Recognition	Choices	Enjoyment
Relaxation	Being Loved	Success	Independence	Laughter
Sexual Activity	Being Respected	Importance	Freedom From	Learning
Food	Friendship	Achievement	Freedom To	Change
Warmth	Sharing	Skills		
	Co-operation			

What are these needs? Dr Glasser describes them as **Survival (health and safety), Love and Belonging, Empowerment, Freedom, and Fun.**

Again, check out the cards in the **Get Happier Toolbox** in the **Supercharge your Dragster** section, cards 1 to 6, and the questions will guide you to identify plans to meet each need more effectively.

We are constantly seeking to balance these needs, often unconsciously. But when we are aware of them, we can make conscious and deliberate choices to make our lives happier.

So try this exercise: Look at your life right now. What do you most need?

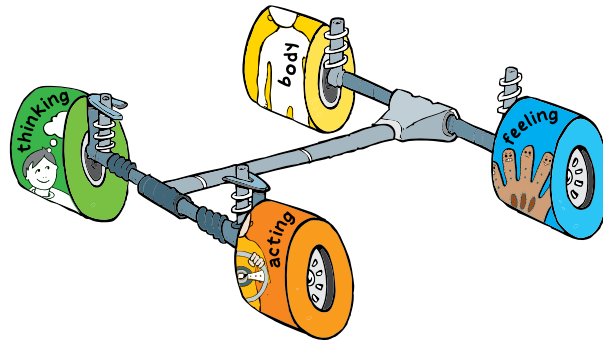
More health, more connection with others, to be more effective and empowered, to have more choices or to have more fun? Choose the most pressing need and make a SMALL plan to get more of what you need today!

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## The 4 Wheels: Emotional Intelligence

1. *Check your back wheels. What are your feelings and body telling you?*
2. *What are your front wheels doing? What are you telling yourself? What are your actions?*

*What to do... If necessary change your front wheels to help yourself feel better.*



The four wheels of the car represent a practical model of emotional intelligence. Each wheel represents one of the four components of our total behaviour: feelings, physiology, acting, and thinking. In the Get Happier School program, the students discover the secret to understanding and managing their feelings effectively by learning that we only have direct control over the acting and thinking components.

Negative emotions will creep up on us, but we can do something about them when we recognise them. We may experience feelings of frustration, anger, or resentment, or we may experience a physiological trigger such as a headache, a sore back, or rapid breathing. We often have our unique triggers. When my clients learn about the four parts of behaviour as the four wheels, they can often move back into control of their lives.

The two back wheels are represented by our feelings and physiology, and the two front wheels by our acting and thinking. Our feelings and physiology wheels are simply feedback that provides us with information to adjust our thinking and acting wheels to move back into balance. **We only have immediate control over the two front wheels, our thoughts and actions.**

Becoming more aware of our feelings and physiology enables us to disrupt a pattern that could increase our stress and result in something worse. As soon as we become aware of the reaction, take a nice deep breath, walk away, or do anything that will facilitate a more centred state. Distracting ourselves and re-focusing is not giving up or avoiding the issue at hand. It is a wise and thoughtful decision that enables us to become centred and return to the situation more relaxed and logical in our thinking. Dr Glasser once said, ***'If you're doing something that is not working for you, it is a good idea to stop doing it.'***

Later when we are more relaxed, we can dig a bit deeper and explore some of the patterns that trigger the stress responses. We may be expecting too much of ourselves or others, or we may be experiencing some significant challenges in our own lives at that time. Many of us are still being too harsh on ourselves and others, believing we can control people and things outside ourselves. If things are getting too much, it is always wise to get some support so you can identify the self-sabotaging thoughts and actions in your life, and devise a plan to manage them.

Habitual and learned patterns of thinking can be challenging. Most of us have between 60 to 80,000 individual thoughts per day. Research has found that up to 80% of these thoughts are negative. Simply recognising these thoughts is the first step to changing them. We can learn to educate our inner voice for more positive messages.

It is important not to be overwhelmed by an intrusive or unhelpful thought.

We all have them.

We do not always have control over our first thought. However, we are in control of our second thought and our first action!

You can discover some great lists of positive affirmations in the card sets and books of the Get Happier Program. You can learn them so they become (nearly) automatic!

***'What we tell ourselves will create our reality. Thinking of a student as behaving badly disposes you to think of punishment. Thinking of a student as struggling to handle something difficult encourages you to help them through their distress'*** Anon

Just a reminder not to be intimidated by negative emotions. They have helped us survive in the past. They let us know that we need to adjust our actions or thoughts and that some of our behaviour is not presently working for us. Don't ignore painful signals for too long but ask yourself: What message is this feeling sending me?

Look at the '**4 Wheels 2 Get Happier**' cards in the **Get Happier Toolbox** and the instruction book for fun, visual and engaging ways to recognise and change painful feelings using the four wheels concept. There are some great ideas in the one-day introductory training that we conduct for teachers when the program is commenced, and within the video training series that is part of the subscriber area for your school. Check some more strategies in the ebook, '**How to Raise Positive and Empowered Kids**'.

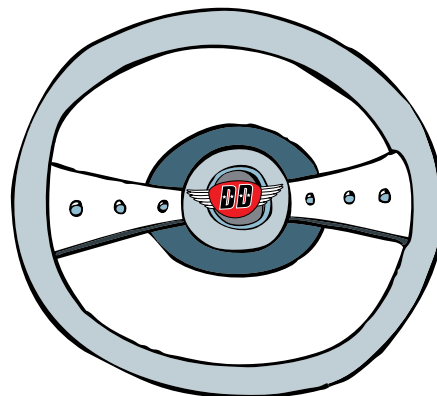
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## The Steering Wheel: Identifying What You Really Want!

3. *Check the direction of my car.*

- *What do I really want?*
- *Where do I want to go?*
- *Who do I want to be right now?*

*What to do... Change direction if necessary.*



What is your direction in life? Have you ever explored why you are a teacher or your values and beliefs?

Many of us have done this at some level when we decided to become a teacher. But with the everyday pressures of life, we have forgotten why we are in this job in the first place.

When we have a strong picture of our purpose in life and engage in meaningful activities to achieve this, we are more likely to be positive and inspired in our everyday life. This is one of the key protective factors against burnout because when our lives become purposeless and lack meaning, we are more at risk of burnout.



As well as answering the questions on the back of the steering wheel card number 9 in the **Supercharge your Dragster** series, you could check out your values for free on Dr Demartini's website, <https://drdemartini.com/values/?tk=838>

I also strongly recommend the self-coaching workbook by Larrie Winzar called, '*Are you Following your Bliss?*' This has hundreds of great activities to explore ways to understand your purpose and get the best out of your life.

If you haven't worked out what you really want, you are at the mercy of a world of marketing and manipulation, which will seek to tell you what they think you want.

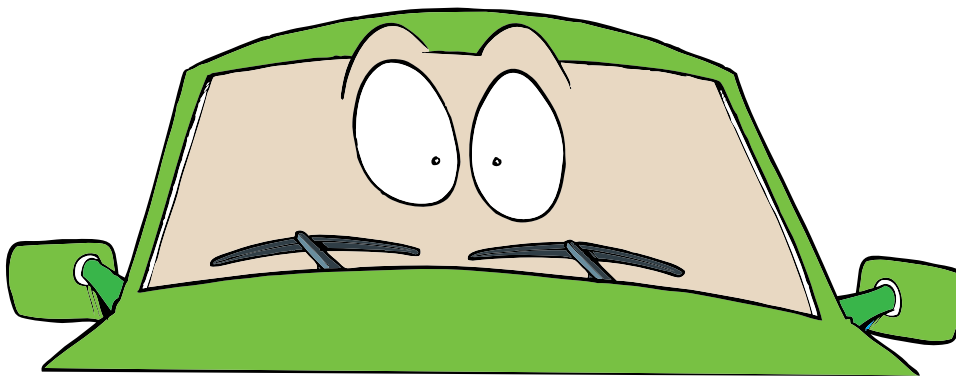
If you discover that teaching is no longer satisfying for you, you may wish to consider an alternative career that is more satisfying.

I have seen many great teachers who have transitioned to other roles and careers.

Alternatively, you could read this book and see if you are willing to make some small adjustments to your expectations and management strategies to move into greater control

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## The Windscreen: The Psychology of Perception - '*What am I missing?*'



4. Drive around and look at the situation from another angle.

5. Clean or repair my windscreen. My vision might be smudged, investigate. Take another look. Look once, look twice and then check again!

*What to do... Stop and take a closer look. Am I missing anything here?*

The windscreen represents the psychology of perception. What are you actually seeing? What are you missing? What can you do when nothing you are doing seems to be working? One powerful option is to stand back from the problem and gain a better perspective.

We can drive around and look at the world through the windscreen from another angle or perspective.

Card number 8 in the **Supercharge your Dragster** series in the **Get Happier Toolbox** has helpful questions to help us gain a more realistic and happier perspective on any challenge we face.

Have you ever discovered, when looking back on an issue you found challenging, that as a result of working through that issue, you have become stronger and happier?

When we are caught up in a problem and are desperately trying to work it out, we often need to stop, take a break, and look at it from a different angle.

For example, rather than looking at the situation through a 'victim' lens, we could change over to the lens of 'gratitude'. When we appreciate those things we take for granted and even our challenges, we can often move into a more positive mind state.

Put your right arm straight in front of you with your thumb raised and your eyes focused on your thumbnail. The thumbnail represents the extent of the 'reality' that you are perceiving right now.

We only have the capacity to see a tiny part of 'reality'. What we are actually seeing is restricted by our limited knowledge, sensory perception and our values, beliefs and cultural knowledge.

So, never think we 'know it all' and we will live a happier life.

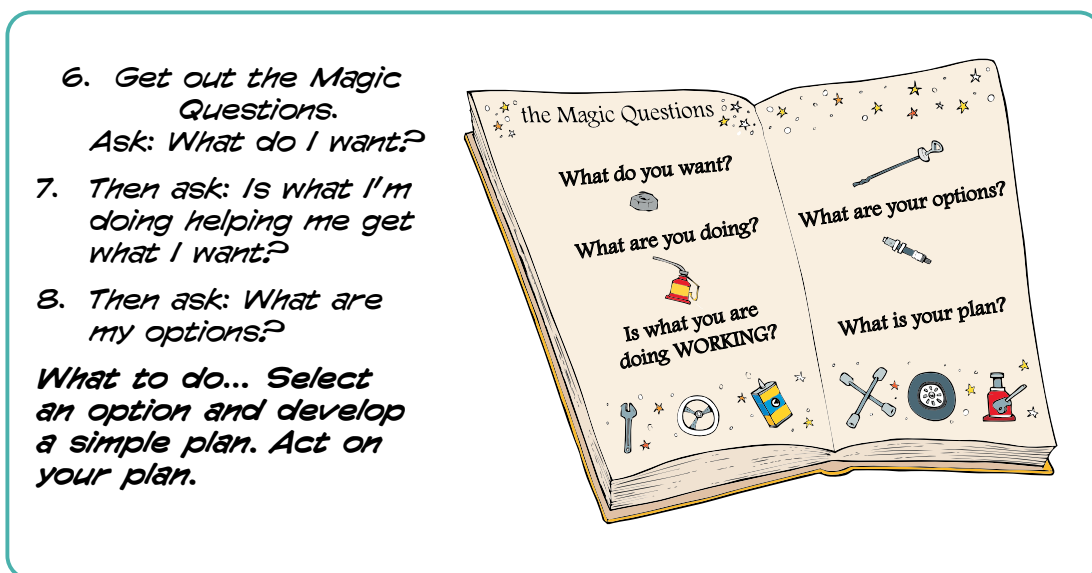
Remember, it is easy to spot a yellow car when you're always thinking of the yellow car. It is easy to spot an opportunity when you are always thinking of opportunities. It is easy to spot reasons to be angry when you are always thinking angry thoughts. What you choose to focus on becomes your reality.

Looking at the world through the windscreen of gratitude will transform your experience of life.

***'Have you heard about 'glimmers'? They are the opposite to 'triggers'. A glimmer is a tiny micro-moment of happiness: a sign of hope. Once you begin to look for them, they will start to appear everywhere!'***

Lorna Hare.

## The Car Owners Manual: A Problem Solving Process



These powerful self-evaluation questions were developed by Dr Robert Wubbolding and are used by counsellors and coaches worldwide. Dr Glasser says: 'I have noticed that happy people are constantly evaluating themselves. Unhappy people are constantly evaluating others.'

So, self-evaluation skills are necessary if we want to live a happier life.

In our school program, we also teach these self-evaluation questions to students and use posters, games, and activities so they can practice asking the questions to solve their problems. We use

these questions attached to a teachers lanyard in the school ground to help students learn to solve their problems.

a. We always begin by **identifying what we want**. We often focus on what we don't want, but we must flip this and work out what we **really** want. The questions for exploring what we really want are on the back of card number 10 in the '**Supercharge your Dragster**' cards in the Get Happier toolbox.

b. Next, we **identify what we are actually doing and thinking**. This requires us to be reasonably honest with ourselves. For example, are we wasting our time focusing on unimportant things, do we have thought patterns that sabotage how we feel, or do we have bad habits that result in us feeling bad?

In his book, '*The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*', Stephen Covey asks us to identify the things in our lives that are **urgent** and those that are **important**. He points out that when our lives are filled with constant urgent tasks, we cannot make time to look after ourselves in our workplaces and family lives. Acknowledging what we are doing and taking responsibility for getting that balance right is critical. Spending too much time out of balance means we cannot be in control of our lives.

c. The next question is simple but profound. It asks, '**Is what we are doing helping us get what we want?**'

d. **Final Questions: What are your options? and What is your plan?** There is always some change we can make. Effective change always begins with small changes. Trying to change too much all at once is rarely effective or realistic and can result in frustration and giving up. So developing a simple, achievable, and measurable plan to achieve our goal, is the first step to managing the situation in which we find ourselves.

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## SOME STRATEGIC SELF-MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

### Starting the day

Give yourself five minutes before you start your school day to prepare yourself mentally and emotionally for the joys and challenges of the day.

Many of us use mindfulness strategies we teach our students. I have created a short mindful recording for you that many people have found extremely helpful as they prepare for another day.

[Mindful meditation audio](#)

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### Ending the day

You have experienced nearly every emotion during the day in your very intensive role. You could use another mindfulness activity to switch off from the day. Imagining closing a book or turning the switch off.

A simple strategy like this can help us from taking home the emotional stress we may have accumulated during the day. A nurse I know would spend a few minutes at the end of the day documenting her successes and the critical tasks for tomorrow, and then lock them in a drawer in her room. Having created closure, she was able to go home and relax.

## During the day

When you feel under pressure, give yourself 30 seconds or a minute to centre yourself by taking deep breaths and re-focusing. If you need a break, even a short walk or doing something you find satisfying in the school can help you relax. Enjoy a pleasant chat with a student or a friend. Take a look at the 'Cool Down Your Brain' card in the 'Open Road Thoughts to Get Happier' card set for other ideas. One teacher I know organises himself to arrive well before class and remain at school for maybe an hour after the students have gone. During these times, he remains focused on his preparation and required follow-up. By avoiding chatting and low-priority actions, he is then generally able to go home to his family in a more relaxed state

You may not want to use this strategy, but you still need to create your own structure for daily self-management. Otherwise, you will always have your life controlled by others. Imagine what it would be like to give yourself an extra hour each week to do something nice for yourself!

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## Being present

The world we live in is becoming more complex by the day. Recognising what we can and cannot control is the first step to managing these complexities. The truth is that we can only control what we are doing at the present moment. The past is gone and the future is unknown. When we are willing to let go of those things we cannot control, we give ourselves space to improve the quality of our own lives.

In addition, when our brain is overloaded, it can quickly become scrambled. A client recently compared his brain to a computer and told me he needed to delete a few files!

So ask yourself, 'Which files do I need to deliberately delete?' Getting rid of time wasters enables us to find time to experience true relaxation, and being in the present allows us to enjoy our life more.

A friend just told me that the unhappiest years of his life were when he spent over an hour daily on social media. Comparing his life to what appeared to be the glittering success of others, expecting the impossible or a perfect life, fear of missing out (FOMO), and general distraction led him to lose his sense of gratitude and appreciation for his own wonderful life, family, students, and career.

The number one regret of many people at the end of their lives is that they wished they had the courage to live a life true to themselves, not to the life others expected of them. Always remember that happiness is not about getting there. It's about being here, fully in the moment.

What about multi-tasking? Although multitasking continues to be popular amongst some employers, research is clear that it always results in inferior outcomes compared to focused and intentional work. This may not always be possible, but the more often we are in the present moment, the more we will achieve and, as a result, lower our stress levels.

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## Develop some regular practices to help you re-energise yourself and your brain.

In his book, *Positive Addiction*, Dr William Glasser notes that many successful and talented people energise themselves, not through short-term fixes such as drugs, but by having positive practices that they feel compelled to do every day. These positive addiction activities vary greatly. It is my morning swim that I always find switches on my brain, energises me, and prepares me for a more productive day. For others, it may include a morning walk, playing the piano, yoga, cycling, meditation, music, or singing. It is well documented that such a practice will add quality and energy to your life.

In my experience, I have found that most people have developed their own personal toolbox of effective management strategies. The only problem is that they forget to use it! We can easily become complacent and slip into the quick fix strategies that in the long term simply don't work and make things worse. Think of any of your negative addictions: they may have allowed you to escape your misery briefly, but in the long term, they have made things worse!

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## Reading

First of all, don't believe everything you read! As you know, we live in a time where influencers and social media dominate with quick-fix solutions designed to publicise themselves or their products.

Changes in our world are so rapid that what may have been true yesterday is false today. For these reasons, I'm always cautious of so-called research into behaviour that sometimes exists to raise the profile of academic researchers or popular writers.

To find some universal truths amongst the mass of information, I always look to original texts relevant to their time and culture and continue to be relevant and accurate today. Such books have passed the test of time and the experience of millions of people worldwide.

Next, the books and information must pass the common-sense test, where we intuitively find the ideas to resonate with clear and practical thinking.

Finally, it's okay to be sceptical, so be skeptical of everything you read in this book!

Read widely in the area of human behaviour to increase your understanding of what you're dealing with both personally, in your family and the classroom. An easy start for you would be my e-book, '**How to Raise Positive and Empowered Kids**', which explains behaviour simply and practically. You can then read some of the books I have referred to, which are in the reference list at the end of the book.

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## Balance is the key

I recently attended a farewell to a teacher who is leaving to commence another career. In his farewell speech, he made several points that are worth mentioning.

Firstly, he referenced the importance of **family and friends** and making sure that they remain a high priority if we want to turn up to work in a positive state of mind.

Next, he emphasised the importance of **colleagues working together as a team**, co-operating and sharing each person's strengths and skills that each person brings to the job.

He then talked about the importance of **balancing our basic needs**: survival, love, power, freedom, and fun.

Finally, he pointed out that in the hurly-burly of life in school with a lot of pressure and expectations, we must **prioritise ourselves** and our well-being and mental health.

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## A formula for stress.

Many years ago, a colleague gave me a simple formula to use when in a stressful situation. It requires us to thoughtfully choose the most appropriate response.

It is. **AAAbc**

The first **(A)** stands for **Alter**.

If there is something constructive we can do to manage the challenge, do it.

The second **(A)** stands for **Avoid**.

When we look closely at a challenge, it may be that we simply have no need to deal with it.

The third **(A)** stands for **Accept**.

When there's nothing we can do, we don't waste our time and energy trying to deal with it.

Instead we focus on **(b)uilding (c)ompetence** to manage our feelings and behaviour to strengthen ourselves in the face of adversity. The processes within the Get Happier program are designed to achieve this outcome.

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## Gratitude and success.

***'Train your mind to see the good in everything. Positivity is a choice. The happiness of your life depends upon the quality of your thoughts.'*** Nan Hua Temple.

Re-define what success means to you. To me, success is simply showing up and having a go. This means I am always a winner, regardless of the outcome of my actions.

I love this quote by Nelson Mandela: ***'I never lose. I either win or I learn.'***

So never let that one student, that one co-worker, that one parent, that bad day, convince you that you are not a great teacher!

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## So, how does change happen?

When we give up trying to be 'perfect' and 'right', and 'needing to control others', we release tension and stress. We can apply our energy to more important things, such as enjoying the journey and making a real difference.

**Change is a process**, not an event, and we are always surprised by how quickly it can happen. But it always happens just one step at a time.

Remember, we are looking for progress, not perfection.

Be at peace as you remind yourself that change takes time and patience, and avoid the quick fix.

As my plumber recently asked me, 'Do you want the work done quickly, or do you want it done well?'



This is the process:

***First it is an intention***  
***Then a behaviour***  
***Then a habit***  
***Then a practice***  
***Then second nature***  
***Then it is simply who you are***  
(Anon)

And what can be better than simply being who we are? It takes away the stress of comparing ourselves to others and feeling we are competing with everybody else.

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*Here are some great visualisation audio tracks from the Get Happier program to help you relax or to problem solve!*

<https://gethappier.net/happyparentingresources/>

**if you want to get more strategies for surviving parenting, download my ebook 'How to Raise positive and Empowered Kids' at [gethappiershop.net](https://gethappiershop.net)**



## STUDY GUIDE

### Questions and Activities for Discussion and Practice

#### Chapter 2

Chapter 2 is about managing yourself. You have been introduced to the Get Happier framework, and you will be able to apply it to enhance your own well-being!

There are some additional practical everyday strategies that teachers have shared with me, as well as a **mindful audio track** that you can use before you begin each day.

#### Questions and Activities:

1. In Chapter 2, **The self-managing teacher: your personal survival checklist** section, there are a number of opportunities to fine tune and evaluate your personal strategies. As you read each section, consider each recommendation, and talk about how you might implement it to improve your own well-being.
2. Share your own unique well-being survival strategies with your team, and write a list of those approaches that you will implement. Make sure that your plans are simple, attainable, and measurable.
3. Working out what is important and what is not important enables us to use our energy most productively. We need to be strategic.

So many military commanders have won the insignificant battle, but as a result, have lost the war!

Discuss the following questions that we can ask ourselves in any situation:

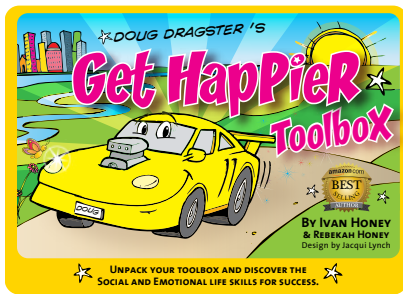
- 'How important is this particular issue compared with my mental health or classroom culture?'
- "Will this situation seem as important in three months time?"
- 'Do I need to take a step back to preserve my mental health?'

# FOR STUDENTS IN THE EARLY YEARS

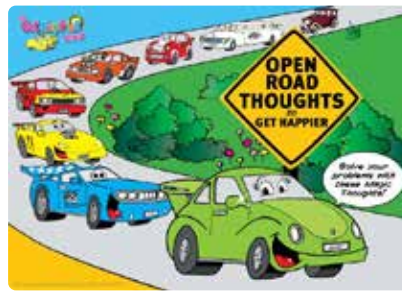




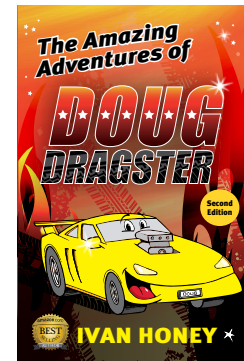
## THE SELF-MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES IN CHAPTERS 3-7 USE THE FOLLOWING RESOURCES:



Doug Dragster's  
Get Happier Toolbox



Open Road Thoughts to Get  
Happier cards and posters

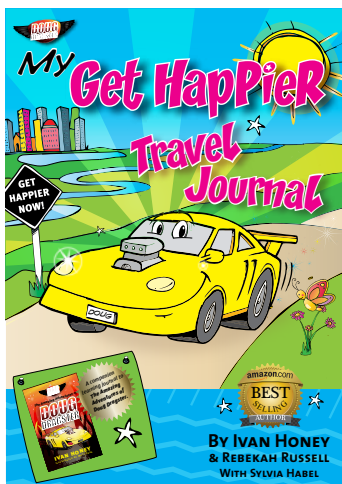


The Amazing Adventures of  
Doug Dragster

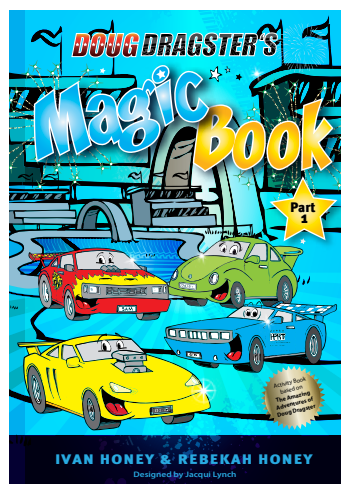
The card sets and the storybook above contain the specific tools and framework for the behaviour management strategies.

The 3 fun activity books below teach the self-management concepts used in the cards.

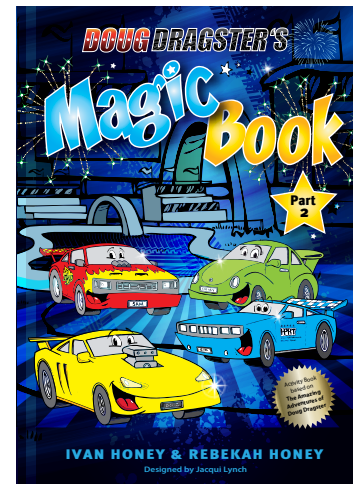
You can access them from the shop at [gethappiershop.net](http://gethappiershop.net) along with other supporting resources.



My Get Happier Travel Journal



Doug Dragster's Magic Books 1 & 2



In the licenced SEL Get Happier School package (see Teacher Guides below), extensive resources and posters are available both digitally or in hard copy, for all grades across the school. [gethappier.net/get-happier-school/the-get-happier-school](http://gethappier.net/get-happier-school/the-get-happier-school)



# USING THE OPEN ROADS FOR WORKING TOGETHER CARDS AND POSTERS

(Grades Reception/Prep and 1)



***To achieve and maintain the relationships we need, we must stop choosing to coerce, force, compel, punish, reward, manipulate, boss, motivate, criticize, blame, complain, nag, badger, rank, rate, and withdraw. We must replace these destructive behaviours with choosing to care, listen, support, negotiate, encourage, love, befriend, trust, accept, welcome, and esteem.***

William Glasser M.D.,  
Choice Theory: A New Psychology of Personal Freedom

# USING THE OPEN ROADS FOR WORKING TOGETHER CARDS AND POSTERS

Refer to the **READY, SET, GO PROGRAM** and **THE GET HAPPIER TOOLBOX** cards.



This set of posters can be downloaded along with the specific lessons in the subscriber **Ready Set Go** Program. I have seen these posters and cards being used in all grades in primary schools as guidelines for classroom expectations and student wellbeing.

**NOTE:** Many teachers have told me that they introduce the Dead End Roads cards from Grades 1 and 2, as they help the students recognise and name the behaviours that lead to unhappiness. They also help students see the contrast between the choices that they make. So don't hesitate to bring out the Dead End Road cards if your students want to talk about what doesn't work.

The Dead End road cards have useful definitions, so that students can recognise and compare the outcomes of their choices. It is important not to demonise the Dead End Road behaviours, but simply to use them to create awareness of the choices that lead to happiness or misery.

The **Ready Set Go Program** contains activities to teach the meaning of each of the **Open Roads**. The students are also taught a series of affirmations or guidelines for each statement which is on the posters. The posters are placed on the wall, as they are taught and are reviewed regularly, creating the boundaries for effective relationships and a co-operative, happy classroom.



## DAILY REMINDERS'

1. Setting clear and positive expectations, and getting the buy-in from the class helps create a self-managing environment. This is what we achieve with these posters because they show how you make yourself happier by driving on the **Open Roads**. At the same time, you are helping create a group culture and cohesion in the classroom around these posters.
2. Set aside a few minutes each day for the students to talk about and list actions that are consistent with the behaviours on the **Open Roads**. I recently visited a Get Happier School, where the Physical Education teacher was walking a Prep class to the Gym. The class had been playing games over the past 2 weeks to explore the meaning of the Open Road, '**respecting**'. As the students walked hand in hand, they were sharing with their partner the actions they had taken to be respectful of others. It was a great example of how teachers were integrating and reinforcing the learning whenever the opportunity arose. There are many such small spaces available every day in the classroom to ask these questions or share the ideas. These simple questions give students the time to stop, think, and evaluate their choices when their behaviour requires some guidance.

### Ask:

- *Did doing 'x' help you get happier?*
- *How did it help you to get happier?*
- *Which Open Road were you travelling on?*

**Note:** Avoid praising Open Road behaviours as students easily get hooked on external evaluation or praise. Instead, ask students:

- *Did you feel happier driving on the Open Road?*
- *Did it help someone else feel happier?*

3. Always focus on the behaviours and attitudes you want. What you focus on **expands**. Concentrating on what you don't want is likely to be perceived as criticism and blame, resulting in disconnection and resistance.

(In a surprising number of cases, the way to solve minor or random misbehaviours is to ignore them!)

Regular focus on the Open Roads is a powerful way to reinforce positive behaviours and to avoid giving too much attention to less helpful behaviours.

4. Link behaviours that increase independence and responsibility to each poster.

For example:

### Respecting Road - 'I care for myself'

Quick discussions on how do you care for yourself?

- *What actions show you care for yourself?*
- *What can you tell yourself to remind you to care for yourself?*
- *How does it feel when you ...?*



**Create an image of a road** on a sheet of paper or material and write down the actions and thoughts students use to care for themselves.

**Illustrate what students do** in a class book that everyone reads. This can be done for every statement in every poster.

Teachers in the upper grades of your school will love you because you have helped their future students learn the thoughts and behaviours for a happier, more responsible life! (and a more co-operative classroom).

## Helping Individual Students Using the Posters and Toolbox Cards

When students are having problems use the following steps.

1. Give them time to calm down, avoiding anything that could appear to be blaming, threatening or coercive.

When students are calm and reflective, they can often find their own solutions. You can provide this opportunity by asking,

2. *What do you think you can do now?* and allowing them to discover their own answer. Help the student create a simple plan to action the ideas and show/ask them how it fits onto an **Open Road**.

3. If students have difficulty knowing what to do, look at the **Open Roads** posters and/or the **Open Road Thoughts to Get Happier Cards**.

**NOTE:** There are examples of using these cards in the **Instruction Guide** booklet for the **Open Road Thoughts to Get Happier Cards** in the pack.

### Ask:

- *Do you want to tell me what happened?*
- *How can I help you?*
- *Would you like to work with me to plan to get happier?*

### Say:

- *When we have a problem, the Open Roads will tell us what to do.*
- *I wonder which one of these cards/posters can help us work this out?*

You may need to guide the student through the **Open Roads** cards, to find the appropriate one, or if the student is unable to read, you will select the card.

### Say:

- *This is how we get happy in our classroom.*

## Example

When a student has hurt another student, you may look at the **SUPPORTING ROAD** card, and together read through the statements.

**You could ask some of the following questions:**

- *What does it mean to be kind? Do you know someone who is kind? What do they do to be kind?*
- *How are you kind to yourself?*
- *What can I do to be more kind to you?*
- *How can we make sure we are kind to others in our classroom?*
- *What would a kind person do in this situation to make it better?*
- *What's your plan? / What is one thing you can do? / What is one thing you could tell yourself?*
- *When you feel angry or upset next time, what will work best to calm yourself down? (You could read the e-book story 'Doug Learns to Breathe')*
- *Can we check tomorrow/later to see how it's going?*
- *Is there anything else I can do to help?*

Write or draw a picture to remind the student of their choice or give them the colouring sheet for that **Open Road** card.

You could also then go to the **ROUNDAABOUT CARD**, and with a tiny car, have the student demonstrate driving down the chosen **Open Road**.

Work out additional statements which reflect each specific **Open Road** and write them up.

Always Identify **Open Road** statements when they arise in the classroom.

NOTE: If the student is not aware of how their behaviour hurt the other student, you could ask that student to share how they felt. If they can't find the words, ask them to choose a **4 Wheels 2 Get Happier** card to show how they felt.



## Getting to Know the Roads

Helping students recognise and understand the **Open and Dead End Roads** enables them to learn to evaluate their choices. When there are problems, you can ask:

- *Are you on an Open Road?*
- *Will this get you closer to happiness or misery/sadness?*
- *Will this get you closer to friends or drive them away?*



## Activities with the Open Roads

### Activity 1

Ask the students to select an **Open Road** card at random and read it aloud. Ask several students to create and perform a role play/drama/skit that demonstrates the selected road.

### Activity 2

The students select an **Open Road** Card and talk about how they could drive on it more often by how they speak to themselves and others. If a number of students are having the same problem, use the cards to identify the problem and role play and brainstorm options

### Activity 3

Ask the students to brainstorm the words that they typically use when they are on an **Open Road**. Draw and name the roads on poster paper and display in a prominent place as a reminder.

### Activity 4

Have a different **Open Road** theme for each week and rotate the cards regularly, so that the language becomes a natural way of thinking and acting.

### Activity 5

The **Open Road Cards** can be integrated into your school or family Road Safety Awareness Program. Link safety on the roads and understanding the meaning of road signs, with being safe yourself and being in good relationships. Use the **Open Roads** to check that you are keeping safe.

### Activity 6

You could draw an **Open Road** on a length of paper and write up all the words and phrases that we could use on each road. This provides the new vocabulary for self talk and helps reinforce the language of wellbeing and happiness.

You will usually be able to recognise which poster is the most appropriate in any situation, for example;

Uncaring Actions to self and others	→	<b>Respecting Road</b>
Giving up Actions	→	<b>Trusting Road</b>
Unkind, unsupporting actions	→	<b>Supporting Road</b>
Putting self and others down	→	<b>Accepting Road</b>
	→	<b>Encouraging Road</b>
Harmful, conflictual behaviours	→	<b>Negotiating Road</b>
Impulsive, thoughtless behaviours	→	<b>Listening Road</b>
	→	<b>Respecting Road</b>

Some people say, *I haven't got time to do this!*

***I say, Have you got the time NOT to do it?***

By teaching students how to understand themselves and others and manage conflict constructively, you are saving yourself months or years of frustration when the harmful behaviours escalate or are expressed in another negative way.

You are also preparing the student with the functional behaviours for successful learning. In addition, you are modelling the behaviours and attitudes you teach the class. Students quickly see this; results will be enhanced when they see you using the **Open Roads**. And why wouldn't we? We all want to be happy!

You can practice using these posters in your own home with your family. Stick the cards on the wall or refrigerator as a reminder. Using the **Open Road** statements, you may identify a dilemma or challenging situation and work out effective responses. Even with responding to a negative thought, work out ways to talk back to yourself using an **Open Road** statement, for example,

**Negative Thought** - *I'm so stupid!*

**Open Road Response: Encouraging Road** - *I'll remember how to do it right next time!*

**NOTE:** The e-books that are part of the early years curriculum are a great resource for explaining and discussing behaviour and choices. You can ask: 'What do you think the dragsters might do in this situation?' and read one of the stories that describes their problem-solving process. It is often safer for students to talk about issues they find sensitive by asking a third party. (the Dragsters)

## Practice For Staff

The **Open and Dead End Road** cards in **Doug Dragsters Get Happier Toolbox** have also been used in organisations as a guide for staff to cultivate their wellbeing, and help develop good working relationships between staff and parents!

The cards provide practice opportunities to use the **Open Roads** language and discover creative ways of expressing friendship and support.

I sometimes use the cards as an awareness building exercise. I may ask, 'I wonder which of the Dead End Roads we are most inclined to use on ourselves? Do we criticise ourselves a lot or nag at ourselves? Please share with your partner a new affirmation you can use that will be more helpful and practice it every day. You could put the affirmation on your phone or computer to remind yourself how to get happier. You could check the back of the cards for ideas.

Role-playing is a fun way to do this, using real-life examples of students in your class. Remember, in role play, we make up a name, and we don't role-play ourselves or use the name of a real example. You can role-play real-life dilemmas and practice responding creatively by staying on the **Open Roads** and avoiding slipping onto the **Dead End Roads**.



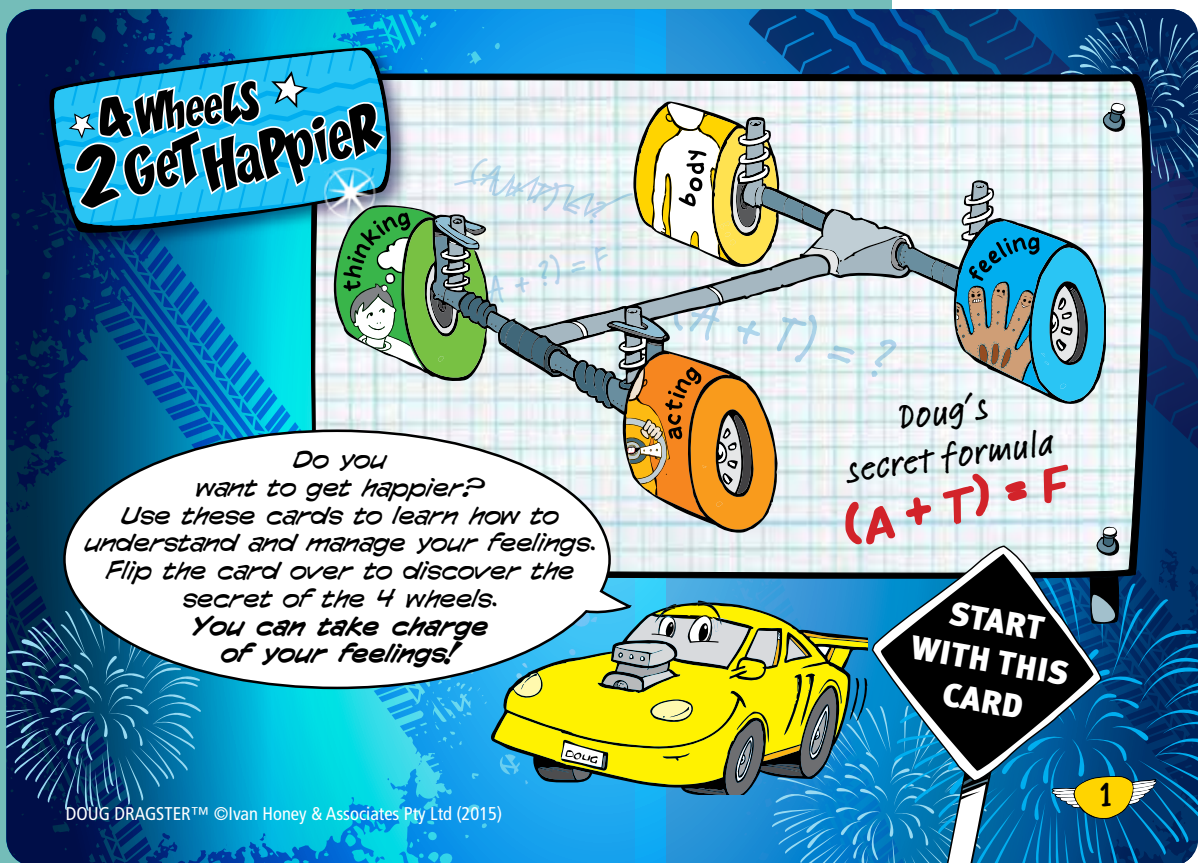
## Steve's Game.

Prepare seven cards with the name of one of the seven open roads on each card. Randomly assign a card to a staff member and ask them to respond quickly with an example of an open road statement that they could use on themselves. For example, if you were to receive the Encouragement card, you might respond with a statement like, 'I'm improving my skills every day!' Alternatively you could give an example of a students behaviour, and ask the teacher to respond using the open road they have in their position.



# USING THE 4 WHEELS 2 GET HAPPIER CARDS AND DIGITAL IMAGES

(Grades Reception/Prep and 1)



***We almost always have choices, and the better the choice, the more we will be in control of our lives.***

William Glasser M.D.,  
Choice Theory: A New Psychology of Personal Freedom

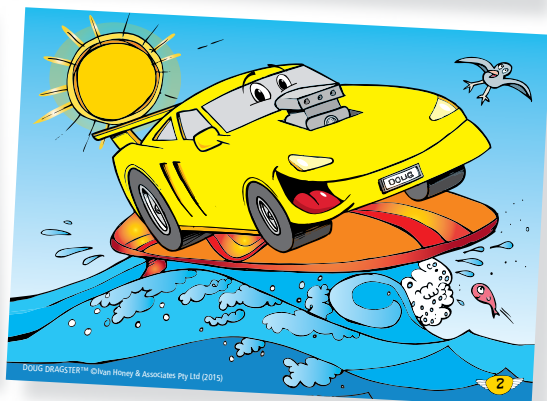
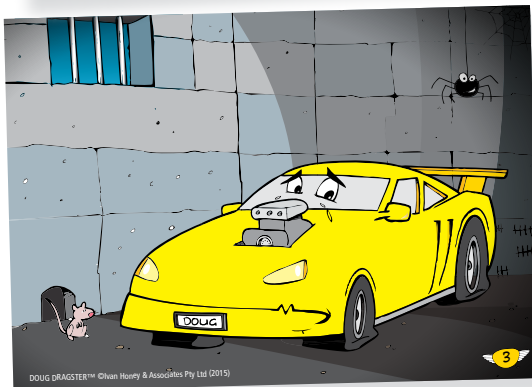
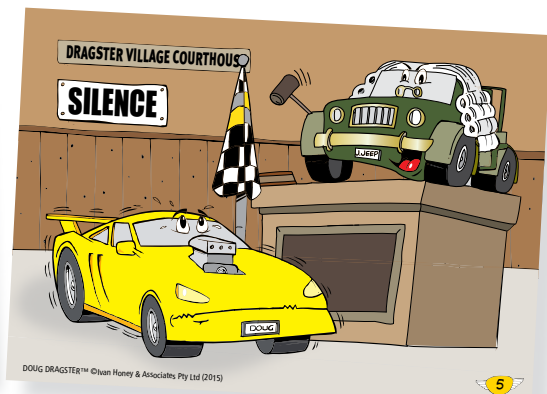
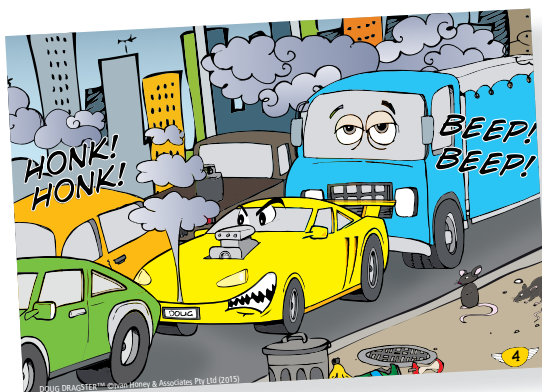
# USING THE 4 WHEELS 2 GET HAPPIER CARDS AND DIGITAL IMAGES

## DOUG DRAGSTER'S GET HAPPIER TOOLBOX

NOTE: You can use the digital images that are part of the resources in the subscriber section of the 'Ready Set Go' Program. You can also use the hands-on card set of 39 cards from the **Doug Dragsters Get Happier Toolbox**.

1. These cards are used at this age to provide a concrete visual image of different feelings. They are used to build emotional literacy and language. The cards can also help students solve problems and plan new actions and thoughts to get happier.

At this level, we do not necessarily teach the 4 wheels concept but use them as fun cards for games, activities, learning about feelings and problem-solving.



2. Playing the card activities below in pairs or groups is a fun way to become familiar with naming and understanding feelings at a meaningful level for each student at their developmental stage.
3. You can teach the feelings using the 20 digital cards projected on your whiteboard.
4. When the students are experiencing out-of-control feelings, the critical initial task is to provide the opportunity for the students to relax their body/mind. Problem-solving and creativity are enhanced by being mentally relaxed.

You will be teaching students to relax through mindfulness activities in the program. These need to be conducted at least every 2 weeks.

These include the program activities:

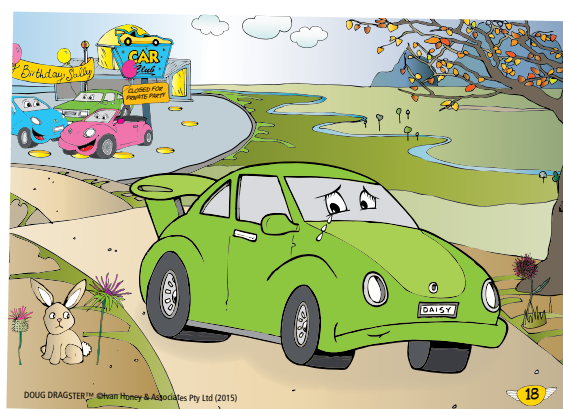
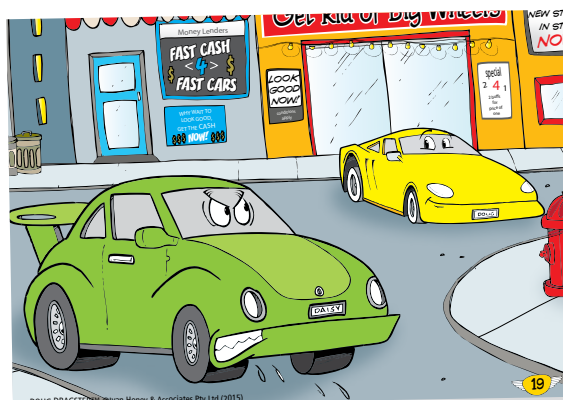
- Relaxing the muscles
- Dragster breathing

The big books can also be projected onto the whiteboard to stimulate discussions and learn about feelings,

On some occasions, however, it may require you to de-escalate an emotionally overwhelmed state by providing the student with a safe place or safe activities to wind down.

These could include having:

- a safe chair or mat (a comfortable space for students to be when they feel overwhelmed)
- a stuffed or real animal to touch
- quiet music or comforting sounds
- calm, repetitive movements such as a swing
- other more active movements such as running, dancing, gymnastics
- reading a loved book
- When having a drink of water (Say: *'This helps me relax and cool down'*, as you give them the cool water.)
- Once the student is calmer, introduce a number of the cards and Ask:
- *Which dragster looks closest to how you were feeling when you (insert harmful action)?*
- Look at this card with the student (card 1)



Ask: them,

- *What is happening here?*
- *What is the dragster feeling?*
- *Do you want to change your feeling?*
- *Can you find a dragster who looks how you would like to feel?*

When the student finds the Dragster, (card 2)

Ask: *How is this dragster feeling?*

- Then Ask: i) *So what could you do, to be like.?(card 2)*
- ii) *What could you tell yourself to be able to feel this way?*

If other students are unhappy,

Ask: *What could you do to help them feel this way too?*

Help the student come up with a simple plan (one or two simple things they can do) and write it up.

Ask: *Next time you feel like (card 1), what could you do to get to (card 2) more quickly?*

## Learning About Feelings

### Activity 1

To get to know the Dragster characters, read the students the 12 Dragster E-books in the Ready Set Go Program. You can introduce some of the **4 Wheels 2 Get Happier Cards** (1-38) at the appropriate part of the story and discuss that part of the story with the students. For easy-to-read stories, you can use the 12 emergent textbooks.

### Activity 2

Introduce one **4 Wheels 2 Get Happier Card** per session.

For example, ask:

*Who is the main character in this card?*

*What do you think is happening here?*

*What do you think this Dragster is feeling?*

*Do you ever feel this way?*

*Do you want to talk about it?*

*What could you do to change the unhappy feeling?*



### Activity 3

Talk about the Dragster and the situation depicted on the card.

If there is more than one character on the card, you might ask the students to consider how those characters may feel, what they are thinking or how they view the situation.

*Ask: What clues in the picture show you how the Dragster feels? If you are not sure, look at the eyes and the mouth.*

Write down all the feelings brainstormed by the students for that card, and if necessary, suggest some other feelings.

Ask the students to vote (hands up) for the feeling/s they want that Dragster to represent.

Write up the word for the feeling on the board. You could write up lists of feelings on a chart. You may attach the feeling word to the card or the corresponding Dragster sticker.

### Swap Your Dragster Game (Players: One adult and a student)

This activity is designed to help students learn to identify and name five major feelings. The questions and cards then assist a creative, problem-solving process in changing a feeling and getting happier.

The **4 Wheels 2 Get Happier** cards 2–21 can be stuck to a wall or spread out on the floor. After all the cards have been seen, discuss and identify the main feelings (angry, excited, happy, sad, scared). Then use the script below to say to the student:

1. *Let's look at how you can change your feelings.*
2. *In this game, you can swap a sad feeling for a happier one.*
3. *Think of a situation when you are not feeling happy. Find a Dragster Card that looks like how you feel.*
4. *Talk about the feeling and see if you can name it.*
5. *Would you like to feel better?*
6. *Choose a Dragster that looks the way you want to feel.*
7. *When the card has been selected, ask: How is this Dragster feeling?*
8. *Talk about the feeling.*
9. *Ask: Is there something you could do right now to be more like this Dragster?*
10. *So, what is your plan? What will you do and when will you do it?*

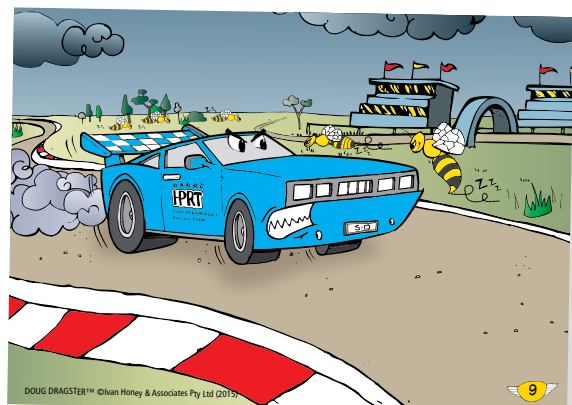
Later, talk about how the Swap Your Dragster Game worked. This game can also be used with the **4 Wheels 2 Get Happier Cards** sticker set.

### The Matching Feelings Game (for 2-4 Players)

This game is similar to 'memory' and is used to practise identifying and naming the feelings. Each of the four Dragsters displays five similar feelings in these cards.

- Mix up cards 2-21 and place them randomly in rows with the picture side face down.
- Turn over any two cards.
- If the two cards match feelings (eg. you can match an Angry Doug with an Angry Sam), and the player can name the feeling, leave them face up.
- If they don't match (eg. Angry Doug and Happy Doug), turn them back over.
- Remember what was on each card and where it was.
- Watch and remember during the other player's turn.
- The game is over when all the cards are face up, they have all been matched and the feelings named.

For very small students, use this game to match the characters. This is a memory concentration game and an opportunity to practise identifying and naming feelings.





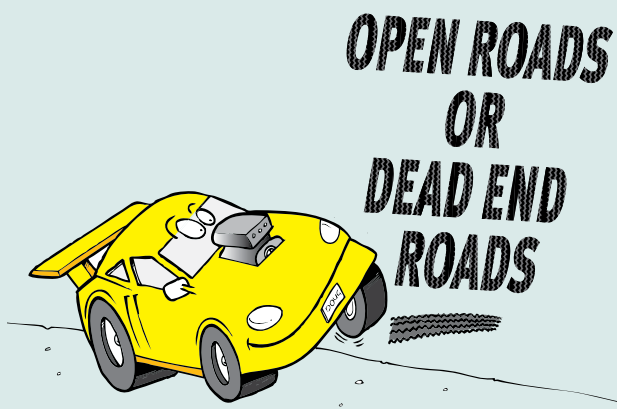
# FOR STUDENTS IN THE MIDDLE AND UPPER YEARS





# USING THE OPEN ROADS CARDS AND POSTERS

(Grades 2 to 6)



*HOW DO I CREATE  
GREAT RELATIONSHIPS  
AND FEEL GOOD  
ABOUT MYSELF?*

*THE OPEN AND  
DEAD END ROADS*

***Everybody needs one essential friend.***

William Glasser M.D.,  
Choice Theory: A New Psychology of Personal Freedom

# USING THE OPEN ROADS CARDS AND POSTERS

## Open and Dead End Roads

### 17 powerful and captivating affirmation cards

These cards teach the affirmations for a positive mindset and a happier life. They also identify the common self-defeating beliefs that undermine mental health. The contrast between positive and negative affirmations helps us to recognise our current ineffective mindset. We can then develop a plan of action to improve our quality of life. The affirmations provide daily reminders of life choices and self-talk that create success and wellbeing.

While teaching the **Open Roads** in Grades 2 and 3, and in **The Magic Book** and **The Magic in Life** in the Grade 4 and 5 Program, place the **Open and Dead End Road** cards from the **Doug Dragsters Get Happier Toolbox** on the wall of your classroom.

Ensure you achieve buy-in from the class, as they understand that the **Open Roads** will add to their happiness, and the Dead End Roads will reduce happiness.

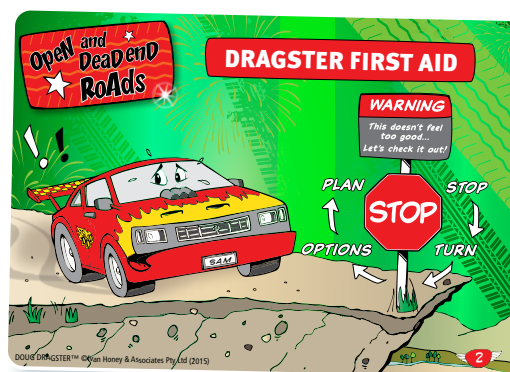


These cards link directly to co-operation between students, enhancing relationships and connections. This co-operation will directly influence the willingness to take risks in learning and increase creativity and academic outcomes. You will also use these cards for helping the students manage their behaviour.

## Dragster First Aid (card 3)

Use this card for Behaviour Management in a classroom or group situation.

After you have taught and demonstrated this method, students will quickly learn to use it independently to solve their behavioural issues. You will simply need to remind the student: *You may need to check out the **Dragster First Aid** card!*



This card is a first step solution to a **Dead End Road** problem. It also provides a simple, structured process for managing behaviours in group situations and making more effective choices.

The **STOP** questions encourage us to **STOP**, recognize the **Dead End Road**, decide to **TURN** and change to an **Open Road**. We can then work out our **OPTIONS** and choose a **PLAN** to do one small thing differently.

In your classroom display and discuss the **Open and Dead End Roads** cards.

Ask your students: *Would you rather we work together using the Open Roads or the Dead End Roads?*

Once the group agrees that the **Open Roads** will work the best and agrees to follow them, you have a social contract. This contract enables you to use the **Dragster First Aid** process with a student using the **Dead End Road** behaviours.

Always encourage and focus on situations where the **Open Roads** are being used.

## Dragster First Aid (card 3) - Using the STOP Process

When a student is consistently using the **Dead End Roads**, find an opportunity to spend time individually with them using the **Dragster First Aid** card. Use this quick self-evaluation process to help them identify and choose more effective behaviours.

Display the 14 **Open and Dead End Roads** Affirmation cards (you could have these displayed on a wall in the room or as a mobile).

### **STOP: Remember to give the student time to calm down first!**

In a friendly tone, ask the student using a Dead End Road behaviour:

*Are you on an Open Road or a Dead End Road? Which road?*

*Let's read that card.*

*What are you doing?*

*Is it working?*

**TURN:** Say: In our classroom/group, we have all agreed to try to drive on the Open Roads.

**Ask:** *Which Open Road could you choose to drive on instead?*

*Select the Open Road card and read it for ideas.*

**OPTIONS:** Ask: *What different actions could you choose if you were to travel on this road?*

*What different thoughts could you choose if you were to travel on this road?*



**PLAN:** Ask: *What is your plan? What will you say to yourself and do to show everyone you are driving on this Open Road?*

*Is there anything I can do to help?*

**FOLLOW-UP:** Encourage them when you notice they are using the **Open Road** behaviour.

These questions will reduce tension and remind the student of what they already understand to be a more effective choice. You will create a vocabulary and mindset which enables a discussion that does not judge or blame. It makes a respectful and safe place for the student to evaluate and change their behaviour.

**Your job is to ask the questions kindly and without coercion. Be open to discussion.**

## Group Personal Development Game

Shuffle all the **Open and Dead End Roads** cards.

Ask each student to select one at random.

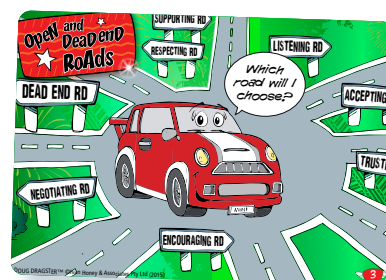
Allow time to read the card and reflect on what it has meant to them in the past.

Each participant reads the card aloud to the group and answers the following questions;

1. *What part has this road played in my life? Tell a story about it.*
2. *How does this card relate to my behaviour?*
3. *How could using the ideas on this card add to my happiness?*
4. *What is one small thing I could do regularly to get happier?*

## The Roundabout (card 2)

For these cards to be effective, the students you work with must understand the meaning of the words described in the previous section (6-8-year-olds). After you have taught and demonstrated this method, students will learn to use it independently to solve their behavioural issues. You must remind the student: You may need to drive to the Roundabout! You can give them the card with all the hints on the back.



How do we recognise when we are on a **Dead End Road**?

If what we are doing doesn't feel right or if we are hurting ourselves or someone else, we can be sure we are on a Dead End Road. These cards help us recognise the thoughts and feelings associated with controlling behaviours and habits. On an Open Road, we generally feel good, relaxed and happy.

We will learn that if we stay on the **Dead End Roads**, we will become unhappy, and people will not want to be around us. In contrast, when we practise the thoughts of the Open Roads, we will feel happy, be successful and confident and have better friendships. The Roundabout Game helps us to learn this.

Use this activity to help yourself and others to get off the **Dead End Roads**.

## The Roundabout Game (card 2)

1. Talk to the student about the situation in their life where they want to be happier, more successful or solve a problem.
2. Display the **Dead End Roads** cards (11-17), and read what the Dragsters say in the speech bubbles.

3. Ask: *Which statements are closest to how you think about this situation?*

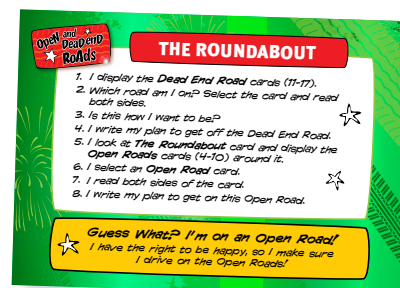
*Is this how you want to be?*

*Write your plan to get off the Dead End Road.*

4. Ask: *Do you want to drive to the roundabout and choose an Open Road?*

Display **The Roundabout** card (2) and the **Open Road** cards (4-10).

5. Say: *Look at the speech bubble on the **Open Road** cards. Choose one that you think will be most helpful. Then check the back of that card to find new thoughts to focus on. Choose one, write it down and say it to yourself daily.*
6. Say: *Now look at the plan to get on the Open Road and write down what you will do this week to change this situation.*
7. Say: *Next week, let's check to see how your plan is working.*



## Example Using The Roundabout (card 2)

- **My Problem:** Jake has been standing over the other students and taking money from them. He is angry that the teacher has found out.
- After Jake has calmed down, the teacher produces the **Open and Dead End Roads** cards, or they look together at the posters on the wall.
- Jake easily identifies that he has been travelling on the threatening road, telling students he will hurt them if they don't do what he wants.
- In his family, he has an older brother who does the same thing to him.
- Because everyone in the school is learning about the **Open and Dead End Roads**, Jake recognises that threatening others will only lead to unhappiness, trouble, and resentment.
- He is learning that threatening will harm his friendships with others, and he is happy to learn some friendly ways to get what he wants.
- The teacher asks: 'What's more important for you Jake? To have some extra money or to have some good friends?'





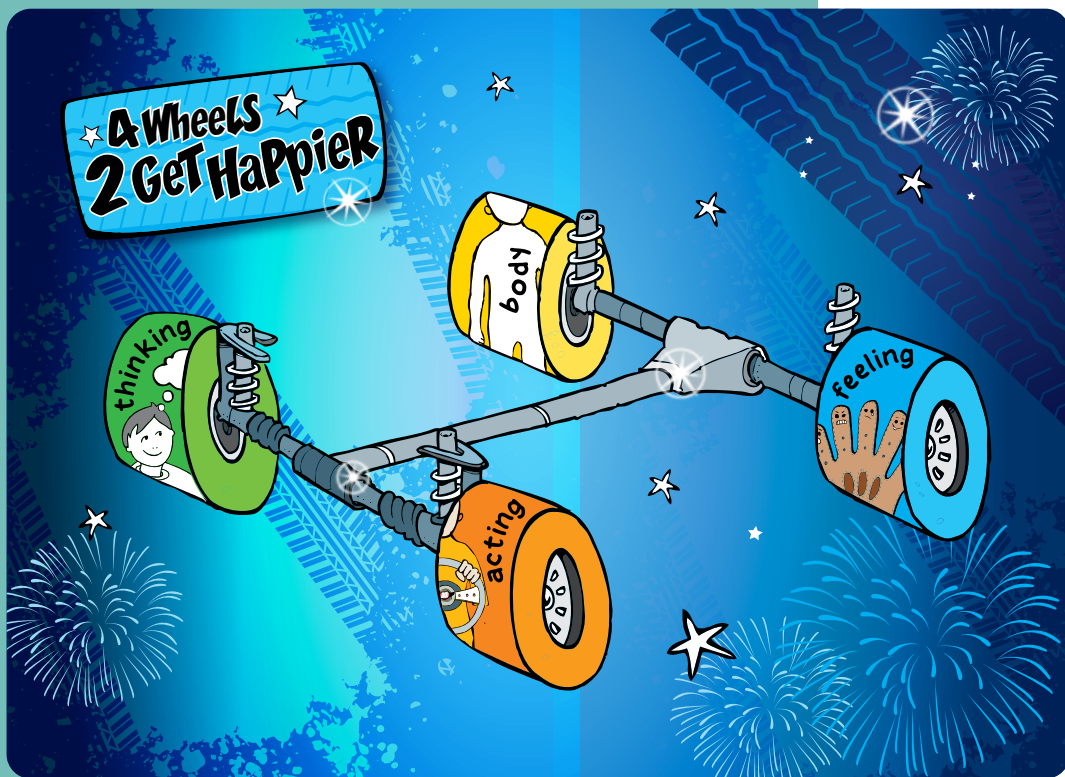
- Jake looks at the roundabout card (number three), and considers which of the **Open Roads** he will choose to get happier.
- Jake chooses the **Respecting Road**.
- He then chooses the plan on the respecting road card : 'I will do something special to care for myself and where possible, treat others the way I would like them to treat me'
- The teacher asks Jake what he would like to do to care for himself.
- After some discussion, Jake decides that as well as buying football cards, he would like to try out with the local football team.
- Jake is then asked what he will do for the students from whom he has taken money. He decides to return the money and apologise.
- Later that week, the teacher sets up small working groups, each of three students, to create posters on the topic, 'How to make and keep friends.' She places Jake with two students who have similar interests.
- **NOTE: Some schools I work in have large posters or murals of the roundabout sign in the classroom or the school grounds for the students to recognise and evaluate their choices.**
- Other schools have the sets of cards in the timeout room or 'garage' where the teacher supervising uses the cards to help the students evaluate and plan new behaviours.





# USING THE 4 WHEELS 2 GET HAPPIER CARDS

(Grades 2 to 6)



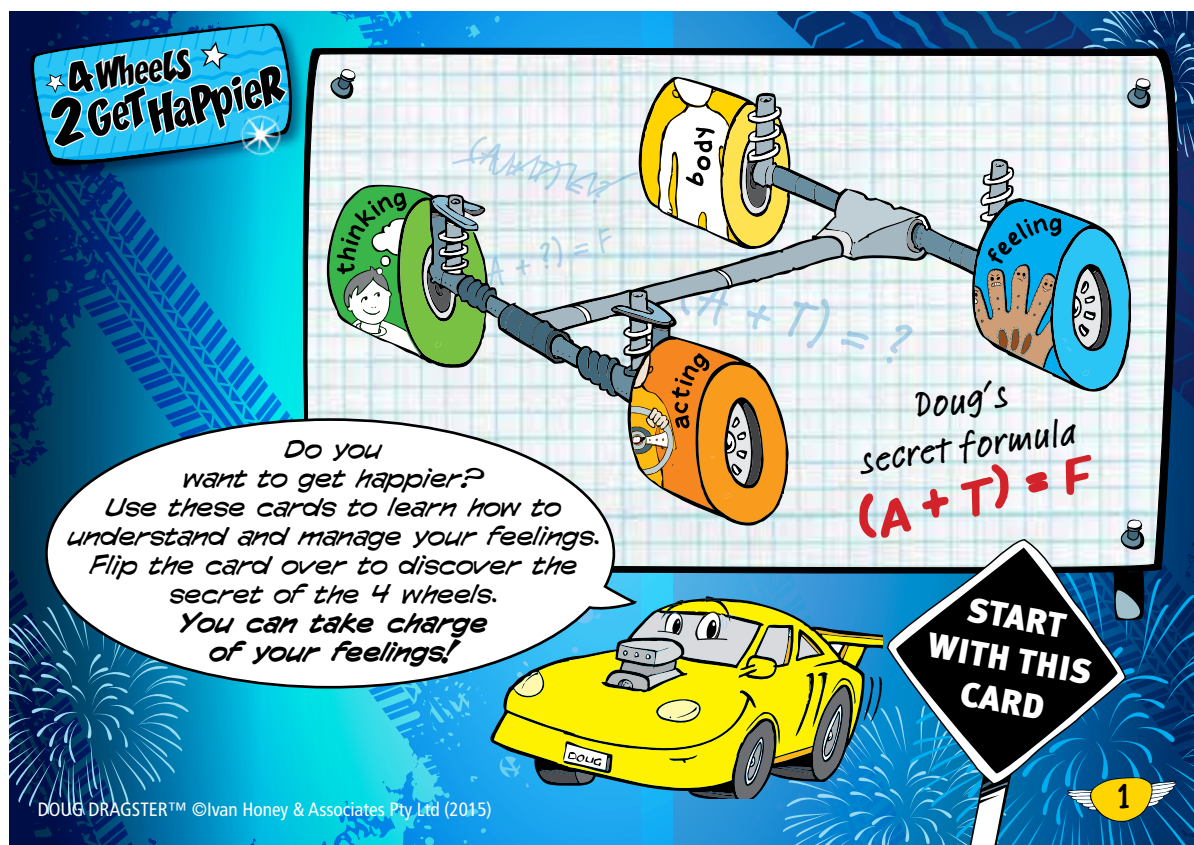
***Finally, even in very difficult situations where you are unhappy  
-no one can be happy all the time – you will know why you're  
unhappy and will attempt to do something about it.***

***Happiness = Mental Health***

William Glasser M.D.,  
Choice Theory: A New Psychology of Personal Freedom

## 4 WHEELS 2 GET HAPPIER CARDS

### 39 COLOURFUL AND ENGAGING FEELING CARDS



These cards draw us into the Dragsters world, helping us project our feelings and thoughts safely onto the dramatic visual images. These fun cards teach a simple visual system to solve problems, learn to feel happier, and make simple plans that your students can use immediately. Using these cards creates a positive connection between yourself and the student you're working with. The cards will help your students to understand, manage and change their feelings.

These cards work individually and can be used in a group to brainstorm solutions to problems. It is a projective process where students safely project and share their thoughts and feelings.

Giving students the tools to solve their problems in fun and novel ways provides a whole group buy-in for being responsible for learning and making more effective choices.

You can help students understand their behaviour better when you show them the card set and

**Ask:** Which car are you driving today?

Tell me what the car is feeling, how does its body feel, what is it thinking and doing?

**Ask:** Is it working for you?

Do you want to change your car?

Select another car.

**Ask:** What will this car be doing or thinking differently?

**Ask:** *So, what's your plan?*

This requires the student to recognize, take ownership and evaluate their choices.

As soon as students understand the concept of the 4 Wheels, you can

**Ask:** *What do you need to do to get on your front wheels?*

Providing them with the techniques and knowledge of how to feel better empowers them. Students learn this process in the programs from Grade 2 onwards and refine their skills over the following years.

Using the process regularly with individuals and the larger group helps students solve their problems.

As they become more skilled at this approach, you may ask them to work out their options using the **4 Wheels 2 Get Happier** process with the planning sheets, shown on the next page.



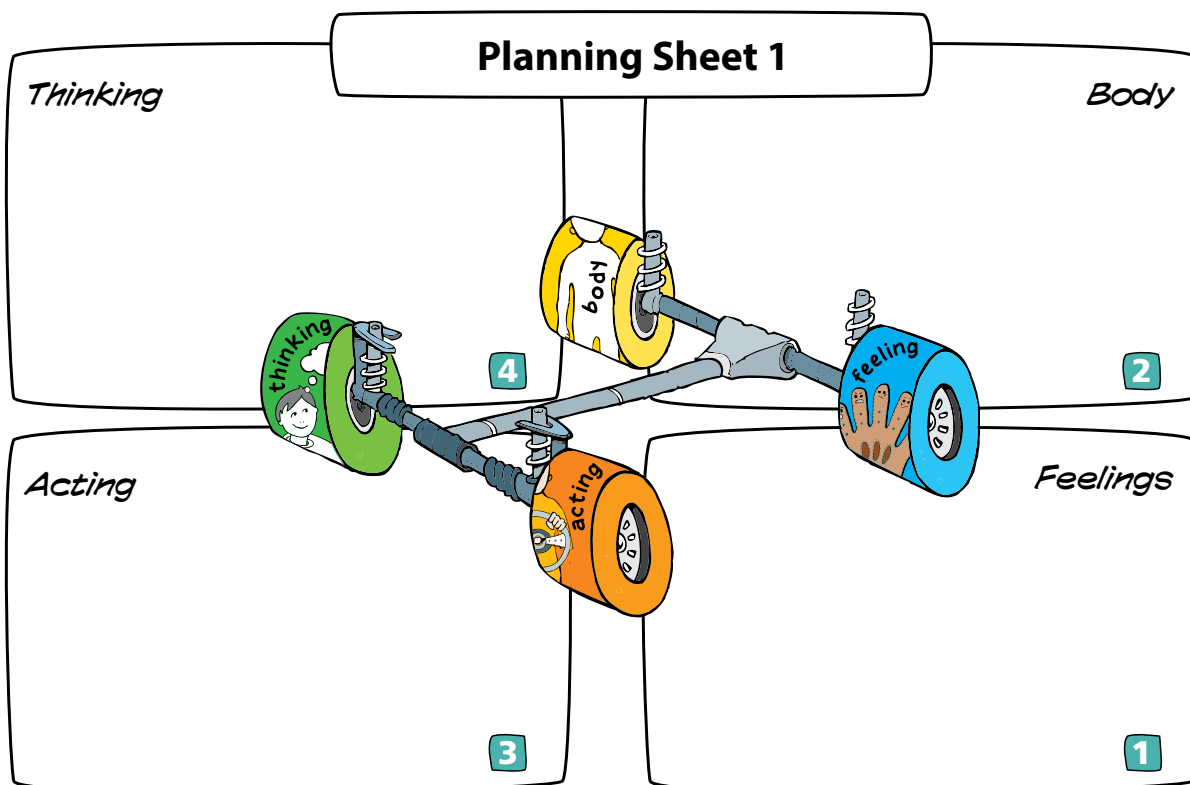
## Doug Dragster's Problem Solving Process.

Do you have a problem? Use this fantastic visual process to understand what is happening and make a plan to solve it! Ivan has taught people all over the world to use this process. He has discovered that it successfully transcends all language and cultural boundaries. People report that they love using it because it is fun and effective.

The **4 Wheels 2 Get Happier** cards can be used in counselling to assist people in solving their problems. The problem-solving process is based on Dr William Glasser's 'Behaviour Car'.

[www.wglasser.com](http://www.wglasser.com)

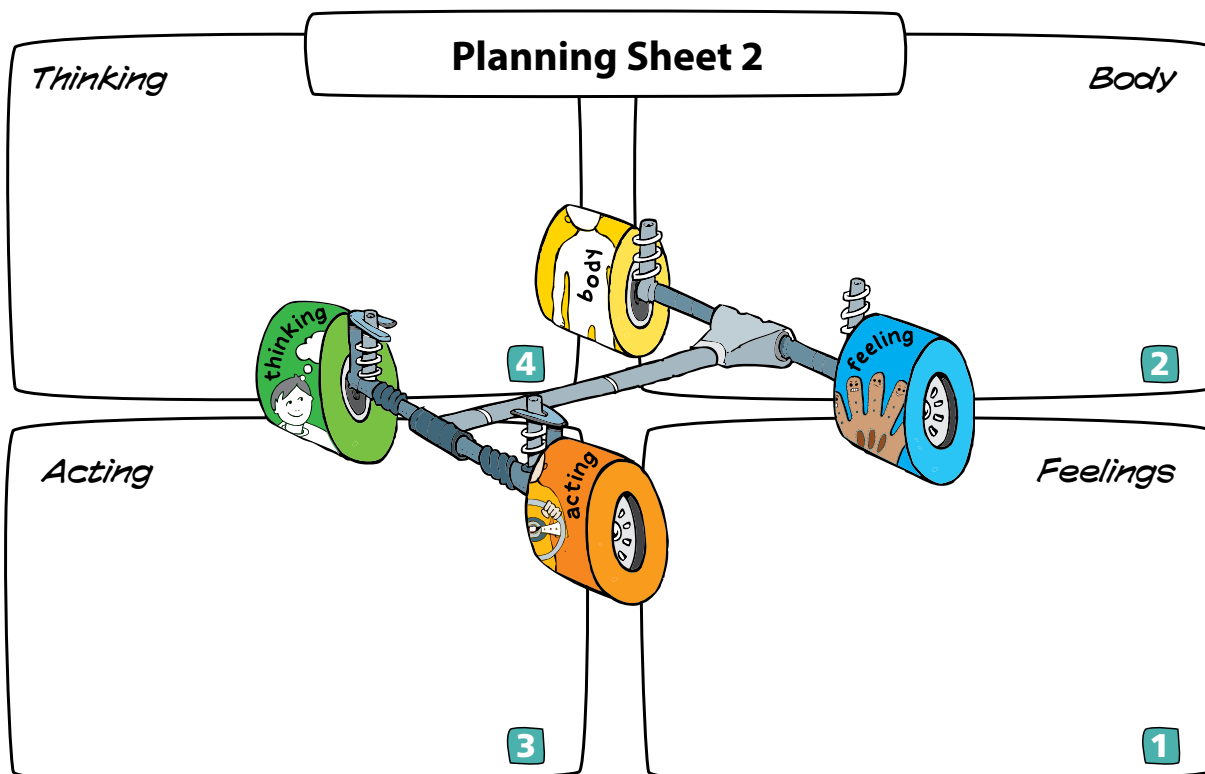
Planning sheets are on the following two pages, and the process is described in detail on the pages immediately following.



**Name of this Dragster:**.....

Do you want to stay in this Dragster?

Choose a new Dragster that shows how you would like to be feeling.



**Name of the Dragster:**.....

Which dragster would you rather be? If you want to feel better, follow the plan and practise the new actions and thoughts every day! You already have your plan in the Thinking and Acting Wheels above.

## Using the Planning Sheets

Display the **4 Wheels 2 Get Happier** cards. Make sure you have developed a good relationship with the student you are working with.

### Use Planning Sheet 1

Ask the student you are working with to discuss their problem or challenge. Then say: *"Choose a Dragster card that shows how you feel."*

Once they have chosen a Dragster, ask them to hold that card or pick out the corresponding sticker and place it on the first set of wheels on **Planning Sheet 1**. If you don't use the stickers, refer directly to the card.

NOTE: Always explore the behaviour in order - 1, 2, 3 & 4.

#### Back Wheels: 1. Feeling & 2. Body

For each question, ask the student to write down the answers in the corresponding box. Ask: *How is the Dragster **FEELING**? What else could the Dragster be **FEELING**?*  
(List as many feeling words as possible)

Then ask: *What is happening inside your **BODY** when you feel this way?*

#### Front Wheels: 3. Acting & 4. Thinking

Ask: *What **ACTIONS** are you taking when you feel this way?*

Then ask: *What are you **THINKING** or saying to yourself when you feel this way?*

Ask the student you are working with to give the Dragster a 'name'.

### Now Use Planning Sheet 2

Return to the **4 Wheels 2 Get Happier** cards and say, *"Choose a new, happier Dragster that shows how you would like to feel."* Once they have chosen a Dragster, ask them to hold that card and place it in the second set of wheels on Planning Sheet 2.

#### Back Wheels: 1. Feeling & 2. Body

For each question, write down the answers in the corresponding box. Sometimes people enjoy writing themselves.

Ask: *How is this new Dragster **FEELING**? What else could the new Dragster be **FEELING**?*  
(List as many feeling words as possible)

Then ask: *What would be happening inside your **BODY** when the Dragster is feeling this way?*  
For each question, write down the answers in the corresponding box.



### Front Wheels: 3. Acting & 4. Thinking

**Ask:** *If you want to start to feel this good, what are 2 new actions and 2 new thoughts you will choose today? (Write the answers in each box).* **NOTE:** Where possible, avoid giving answers. You may provide hints but encourage the student to develop their own ideas. If their plans may hurt themselves or others, point this out and talk about the long-term consequences.

**Ask:** *What name could you give this new Dragster?*

Now put the two dragsters side by side. **Ask:** *Which one would you rather be?*

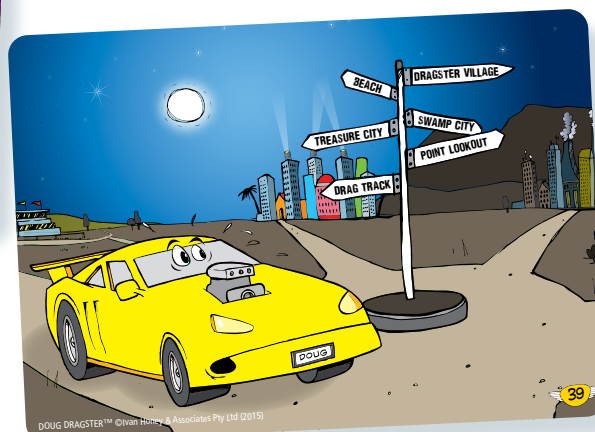
If they choose the unhappy Dragster (this rarely happens), **Ask:** *What will happen if you keep driving this Dragster for the next week, month, or year? (You may need to share your understanding of what might happen with them)*

**Say:** *"Practice the two new actions and thoughts daily if you want to feel better. Keep practising and adding new ideas!"*

After completing the problem-solving process, return to card number 1 to teach the basic principle for changing feelings. **When you change your thoughts and actions (front wheels), your feelings and body (back wheels) will also change.** This idea is central to the development of emotional intelligence.

Photocopy or make a digital copy of the planning sheet and give one to the student you are working with to take home and stick on the wall, fridge or use as a screensaver. Regularly review the planning sheet and the Dragster wheels. It is normal to get back into the unhappy Dragster at times. Still, you can help the student you are working with to keep learning new actions and thoughts to return to the happier Dragster!

**Note:** The more you use the process, the easier the questioning technique will become. Students often need more specific or direct questioning, such as: *"What else?"; "Tell me more?"; "What else do you think the Dragster is feeling?"* You must be clear on the difference between feelings and thoughts in this activity, as this difference is the key to creating sustainable change. You need to change your thoughts first to change your feelings.





**Example**

**My problem:** John was teased by Sam and then he pushed Sam over. John is in trouble and his teacher uses the cards with him.

**Thinking**

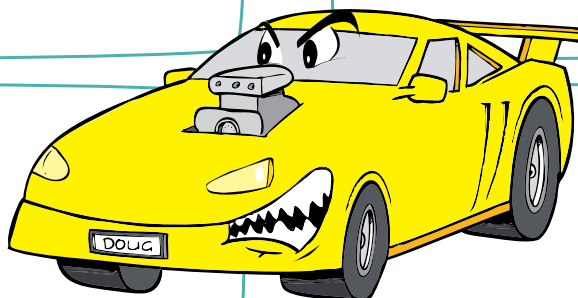
I hate Sam.  
He shouldn't call me names.  
I will get back at him.  
It's not fair.

**Planning Sheet 1****Body**

Hot  
Feeling Sick  
Breathing Hard

**Acting**

Pushing Sam over

**Feelings**

Angry  
Left Out  
Hurt  
Disrespected

**Name of this Dragster:** *Mr Angry*

Do you want to stay in this Dragster? *No!*

Choose a new Dragster which shows how you would like to feel.

**Example**

I select a new Dragster which shows how I want to feel.  
I chose a happy Doug.

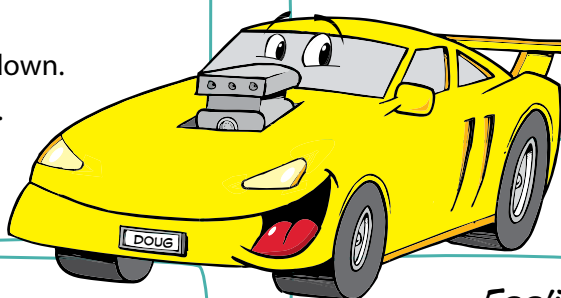
**Thinking**

Some things I will tell myself to feel happier:

1. I don't let what other people say hurt me.
2. I'll stop and think before I hurt anyone.
3. I'm in control of me.
4. When I feel angry, I go away and calm down.
5. I don't like to be hit so I don't hit others.
6. I can always go and talk to the teacher when I have a problem.

**Planning Sheet 2****Body**

Cool  
Relaxed

**Acting**

1. I talk to my teacher.
2. I stop and count to 10 before I do things that get me into trouble and hurt others.
3. I calm myself down by taking some deep breaths.
4. I will apologise to Sam.

**Feelings**

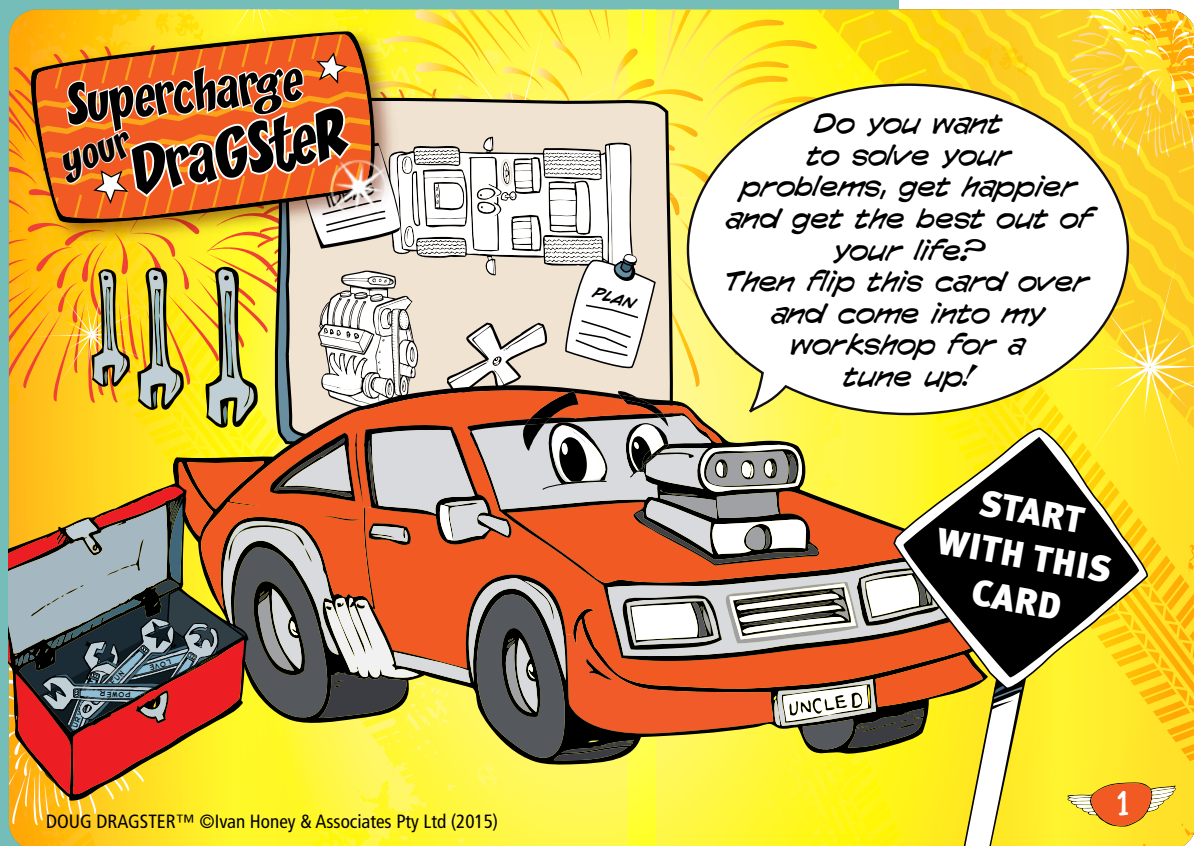
in control  
Safe  
Happy  
Strong.

**Name of the Dragster:** *Mr Cool*

Which Dragster would you rather be? If you want to feel better, follow the plan and practise the new actions and thoughts every day!

# USING THE SUPERCHARGE YOUR DRAGSTER CARDS

(Grades 2 to 6)



***We are driven by five genetic needs: survival, love and belonging, power, freedom, and fun.***

William Glasser M.D.,  
Choice Theory: A New Psychology of Personal Freedom

# SUPERCARGE YOUR DRAGSTER CARDS

## 10 practical life strategy cards from the Get Happier Toolbox.

These cards offer the formula for a regular tune-up to improve performance, solve problems and help us understand the messages our feelings are giving us. Knowing the internal motivations that drive our behaviour enables us to pinpoint the unmet need and develop a plan to get back in balance.

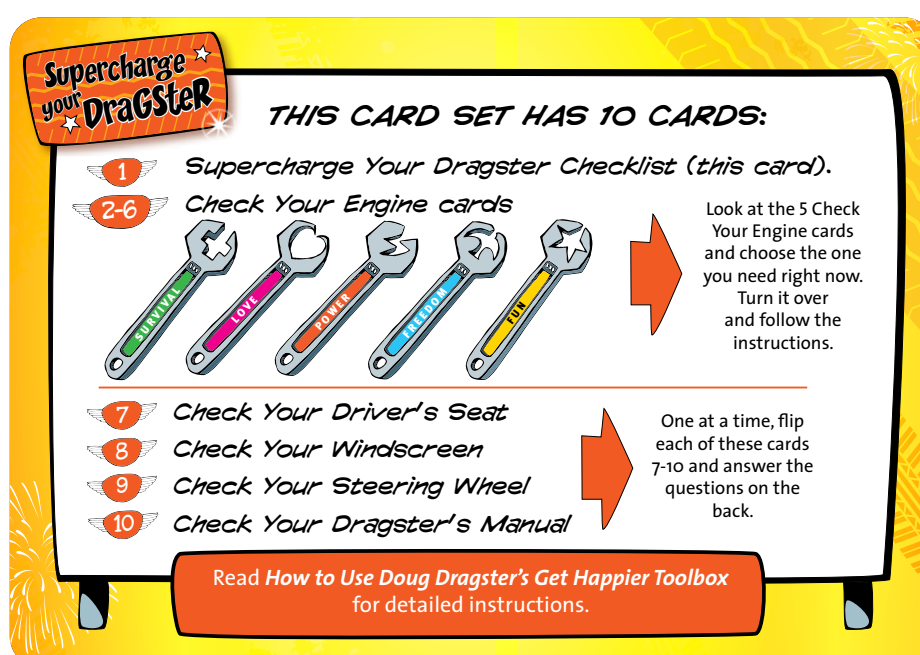
The cards teach a simple and fun visual system and checklist for increasing awareness, setting goals, problem-solving and improving performance. The focus is on the one person you can change — YOU!

There are **10 Supercharge Your Dragster** cards

1. How to Use These Cards
2. Check Your Engine: Survival
3. Check Your Engine: Love
4. Check Your Engine: Power
5. Check Your Engine: Freedom
6. Check Your Engine: Fun
7. Check Your Driver's Seat
8. Check Your Windscreen
9. Check Your Steering Wheel
10. Check The Dragster Manual



Use cards 2–6 together, and explore cards 7–10 one at a time to work out how to solve a problem or improve performance.



## Check Your Engine Cards (cards 1-6)

These cards use the image of five 'Spanners/Wrenches' that can be used to tune the Engine of our lives.

The engine represents the human brain, and the five pistons that drive it represent the five Basic Needs that drive our behaviour (Dr William Glasser *Choice Theory: A New Psychology of Personal Freedom*). Each piston has its own 'Spanner/Wrench' to adjust each need when required. If one or more of these needs are unmet, we experience unhappiness. These cards help us recognise how we feel when our behaviours are not helping us meet our needs. We can flip the card and follow the instructions to create a plan to meet the need more effectively.

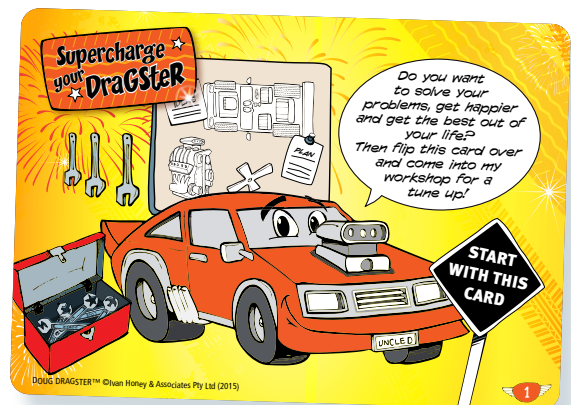
You will notice that the head of each spanner/wrench matches the need.

- **Survival** has a cross, an international symbol that represents food and safety.
- **Love** has a heart, a symbol of love and care.
- **Power** has a lightning bolt, symbolising the power of nature.
- **Freedom** has a bird flying in the sky.
- **Fun** has a star, symbolising the stars exploding from a firework, celebrating life and joy.

## How to Use the Check Your Engine cards (cards 1-6)

**Say:** *If you have a problem or want to improve your life, these cards show you what you need to check.*

1. Begin with card 1: Read the front of the card and then follow the instructions on the back.
2. Place cards 2-6 face up in front of the student you are working with. On the front of these cards, Uncle D describes a range of feelings in his speech bubbles (lonely, disconnected, bored, stuck, powerless, unimportant, unsafe, unhealthy). **Ask them:** *In your present situation, which feeling as described by Uncle D is closest to how you are feeling? or Which spanner/wrench do you want to take?*
3. When they select a card, ask them to turn it over and answer the questions. Please encourage them to write up the answers and stick to the plan. Follow up and keep adding ideas.
4. Soon they will recognise which need is not being successfully met and quickly take action to regain balance.



Students can use the Engine cards to help them recognise when they are preventing other students from meeting their needs.

- In private, place the five Engine cards in front of the student who may be preventing other students from meeting their needs.
- **You can say to the student:** *Everyone in our class has the right to meet their needs to feel safe and connected, to feel important, to have some choices, and to enjoy their day. You have that right too.*
- **Say:** *You may not realise this, but is it possible that you are stopping another student from meeting these needs?*
- The student may then recognise how their actions affect others in the classroom. If not, kindly point out the behaviour stopping others from meeting their needs.
- When understood, you may ask the student if they are willing to work out a way to meet their needs without stopping others from meeting theirs.
- If necessary, you could point out to the student how helping other students meet their needs, you meet your own need at the same time.
- Then together, write up a simple plan to help the student choose a more co-operative behaviour.
- Notice when the student follows their plan and encourage them to continue.
- If the behaviour continues, come back to the student and modify the plan so it has a higher chance of success.

**Note:** This can also be used as a whole class exercise to reinforce the understanding of how helping other people meet their needs helps you meet them too.

## Supercharge Your Dragster Cards (cards 7-10)

Students can use the following cards to help increase awareness, problem-solve and improve performance. They can be used individually or together in a problem-solving session.

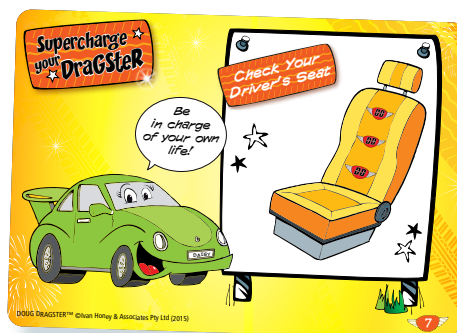
### Check Your Driver's Seat (card 7)

This card may be the essential card in the toolbox!

Use this card to help the student take ownership of a problem. Only when we take responsibility for our actions can we begin to solve the problem genuinely. We can only control ourselves, not others.

After reading the front of the card:

1. Turn it over, answer the questions and discuss the answers.
2. Create a new plan, take action and review it regularly.
3. Question: 'Who is driving your car?'





The question: *Are you allowing someone else to drive your car?* is a key question that I regularly see teachers use in a Get Happier School.

When students understand the concept of driving their own car, this question can be asked in a non-judgemental way.

This question is especially helpful when you see students allowing themselves to be manipulated or coerced by others or in situations where they are allowing peer pressure to overcome better judgement.

The other driver's seat question, *'Are you trying to drive someone else's car?'* can be used when you see students trying to coerce one another.

These quick and easy questions allow students to self-evaluate and quickly make a more effective choice without any long-winded dialogue from us.

### Check Your Windscreen (card 8)

Use this card to become more aware of possibilities and options. The simple process of stopping, observing and viewing a situation from another point of view will always help.

After reading the front of the card, turn it over, answer the questions and discuss your answers. Then identify a new plan to solve the problem and improve performance.



### Check Your Steering Wheel (card 9)

This is a wonderful card for gaining direction in our lives. The questions help us understand who we want to be and identify the actions we need to take. You will be amazed at what you discover.

Knowing your direction in life, being flexible enough to adjust when required and setting clear, realistic goals is crucial for success and wellbeing. Whether you are dealing with a short-term problem or considering your purpose in life, having a clear vision of where you are going provides the foundation for self-evaluation.



Work thoroughly through the questions. Allow think time, and do not rush. Use the content of the student's answer to a question to frame the next question. (e.g. If a student talks about taking a holiday, ask, "What would be the best part of going on a holiday?") You will need to listen carefully to repeat the content of the answers and attach it to the next question. Discuss the answers, and encourage them by asking questions such as: *What else?* *Tell me more* and *What do you mean?* as they answer the questions on the card. Then help them create a plan.

The question, *What do you want?* or *Where do you want to go?* is of course, the first Magic Question.



## Check Your Dragster Manual (card 10)

Sometimes you can go directly to the Check your Dragster Manual card, card 10, and follow up this question very simply by asking the following questions.

1. *What did you really want?*
2. *What did you do?*
3. *Did it really work?*
4. *What are your options now?*
5. *What is your plan?(what, when, how)*
6. *What have you learnt from this?*

At Mudgeeraba Special School, the teachers have constructed lanyards which they attach to large keyrings and carry with them in the class and in the school yard.

When there is a problem, they show the questions on the lanyard in order for the students to solve their own problems.

Use this card whenever you need to solve a problem or improve performance.

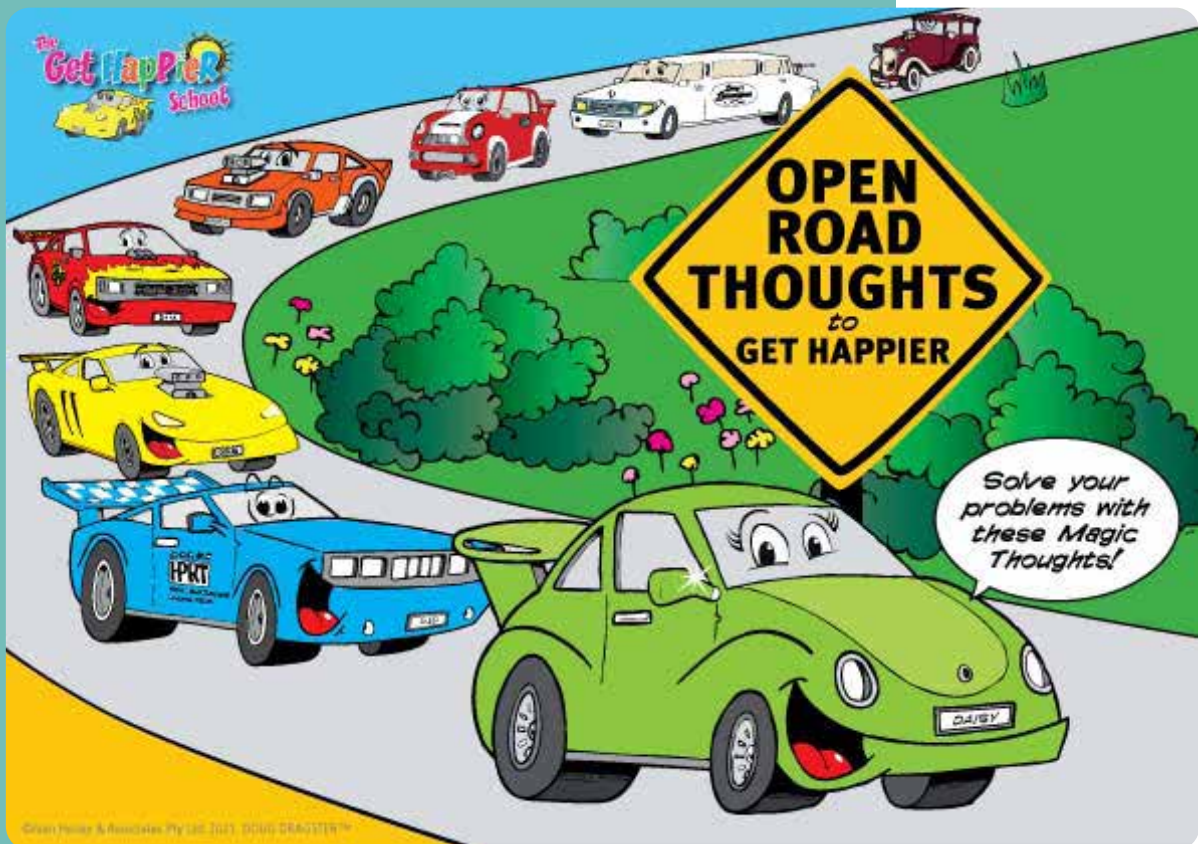
This card is a simple, practical, honest set of questions that help you solve problems and get what you want. Based on Dr William Glasser's Reality Therapy and the work of Dr Robert Wubbolding ('Reality Therapy in the 21st Century' Brunner/Routledge, Philadelphia, 2000'), these questions can be developed and expanded to create a whole system of counselling.

After reading the front of the card, turn it over and work thoughtfully through the questions, gently expanding on each one using simple questions such as: *What else? Tell me more* and *What do you mean?* Ask for clarification and paraphrase what is being said in order to check for accuracy. These additional questions often assist us in digging deeper and identifying the underlying issues.

The Dragster Manual questions have been used successfully by teachers for many years to help students help themselves and transform their lives.



# OPEN ROAD THOUGHTS TO GET HAPPIER CARDS AND POSTERS



***When we depress, we believe we are the victims of a feeling over which we have no control.***

William Glasser M.D.,  
Choice Theory: A New Psychology of Personal Freedom

# OPEN ROAD THOUGHTS TO GET HAPPIER

## CARDS AND POSTERS

### 10 Powerful Affirmation & Problem Solving Cards

Welcome to this powerful set of affirmation and problem-solving cards. This guide explains some of their many uses.

Through games, activities and stories, the dragsters introduce these cards teaching students affirmations and wellbeing. The cards are also available as wall charts.

All behaviours include **Actions** and **Thoughts**, which create our Emotional state. The cards show key thinking patterns that inspire positive and constructive emotions and actions. They are categorised under the seven **Open Road** habits for happiness.

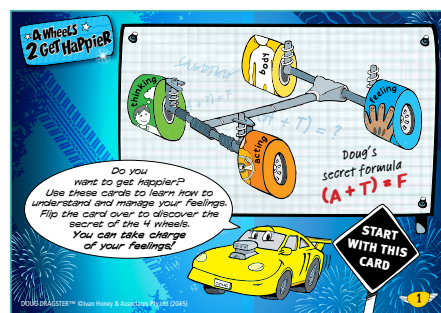
The **Open Road Thoughts** contain the growth mindsets and affirmations that increase happiness, resilience and wellbeing, and improve relationships.

As students learn and practice these new mindsets, they begin to think their way to a better life. The students start using empowering and positive thoughts that give them the confidence to tackle challenges and enjoy life.

- **Working Things Out on the Roundabout** (on the next page) explains a simple strategy for working out problems while at the same time reinforcing the empowering thought patterns of Open Road thinking. It helps develop independent and responsible problem-solving skills and thoughtful reflection regarding the power of thoughts in our lives.
- The **Cool Down your Brain** card is a reminder that solving problems when in a distressed state is unlikely to be helpful. Learning the simple strategies listed and other mindfulness skills is important to reach a calm state before looking for solutions.
- A teacher recently recommended that the cards be carried by teachers (along with the first aid kit) during play periods to assist students in resolving playground challenges (see Working Things Out on the Roundabout example).
- They can also be used in the classroom when someone is unhappy. You could ask an individual or a group: *What Open Road thoughts could help here? And, if you thought like this, what action would you take?*
- When reading a story of conflict or discussing a character in a movie, you could ask the above questions.
- When you read about pessimistic thoughts in a story, you could ask: *Is this an Open Road thought? What could the person tell themselves instead? What would they do differently if they were thinking these Open Road thoughts?* Ask students to share stories of how changing their thinking helped them solve a problem.



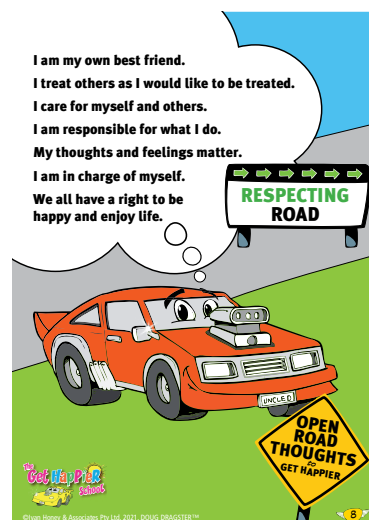
- The students can look at the cards themselves to discover helpful thinking patterns. Students could create a poster to place on a wall to which you can keep adding Open Road positive thoughts.
- Students could act out a role-play to illustrate a dilemma. The class could identify which Open Road will help resolve the problem and the best thoughts to help get happier. They would then be asked why they chose that thought and how it would help.
- For older students, look at a current event and see if you can speculate on the thinking behind certain behaviours and actions of politicians, sportspeople or people in the community. Consider how positive thinking habits will help in each case, especially with sportspeople achieving their goals.
- Look at the **4 Wheels 2 Get Happier Cards**. Ask the students to think about the dragsters' thoughts in the different situations. Then ask, *Does the dragster need to find an Open Road thought? Which one might help them to get happier? If they were thinking this thought, what would they do?*
- These cards work well for adults too!
- For a touch of magic, when you don't know what to do, select 2 cards at random and discover a thought that you can use to solve a problem!



**Remember: Always use a kind, connecting and open approach when using these posters!**

## HELPING STUDENTS WORK THINGS OUT ON THE ROUNDABOUT

1. Find a calm moment or refer to poster 10, **Cool Down Your Brain** before you start.
2. **Ask:** *What happened?*
3. **Ask:** *What do you want to happen?*
4. **Say:** *Let's think about your problem.* You can start by looking at 2 or 3 Dragster thought posters (2-8), or you can select some posters at random.
5. **Say:** *Now, let's find 2 or 3 Dragster thoughts from these posters that would best help you be a good friend to yourself and others.*
6. When the thoughts are selected, say: *Let's write them down and say them.*
7. **Say:** *So, if you were thinking these thoughts, what simple thing could you do to begin solving this problem now?*
8. Enjoy brainstorming together and come up with a simple plan to begin to solve the problem!
9. **Say:** *Now you have a plan, when will you do it? Can we make a time to check on how it worked?*





## HELPING STUDENTS WORK THINGS OUT ON THE ROUNDABOUT

### An Example to Show How the Process Works:

- Sam used his phone to take a photograph of Sally hanging upside down on the Monkey Bars, and posted it to social media without her permission.
- Sally is hurt and angry, and her parents call the school to complain.
- Sam is sent to see you. He is initially defensive, angry and resistant and says, *Everyone is over reacting! I was just having fun!*
- You say, *Sam, It's OK. We can work this out. Let's cool down our brains first so we can work out what to do.'*
- You share the **Cool Down Your Brain** card and invite him to choose a cool down strategy to feel more relaxed.
- Then you could open up discussion by saying, *'I know that taking the photo and posting it seemed like fun to you.'*
- *'But did you realise that Sally and her parents might be upset? '*
- *'Why do you think they were so unhappy?'*
- (Opening up the discussion when Sam is feeling safe allows him to listen, talk about and understand the perils of social media, the importance of listening to other's opinions and needs, and being more aware of the rights of others. This may be an important learning opportunity for the whole class)
- **Then say,** *Let's check out some Dragster thoughts to help us work this out.*

### Sam chooses:

- *When I listen, I get on better with others* (Listening)
- *We all have a right to be happy and enjoy life* (Respecting)
- *I know I won't always get what I want and that's OK* (Accepting)
- *I learn from everything that happens* (Encouraging)

- The thoughts are written down and you **ask:** *'If you were thinking these thoughts, what would you do now to work out the problem?'*

### Sam strategy:

- I know now that I should not have posted the picture without Sally's permission.
- I will remove the photo, apologise to Sally and write a letter to her parents.
- I will create a class poster to remind everyone of the dangers of posting on social media in ways that could upset others.

## SUGGESTIONS FOR INTRODUCING THE POSTERS

Before sharing the new posters, show the students the **Cool Down Your Brain** poster.

**Say:** *If we want to think clearly and work out the best way to solve a problem, Sid Sideswiper has some ideas for us to cool down our brain and relax. How do you calm yourself down when you are upset? Then we will look at the poster to see if Sid has some of these ideas too.*

Write up the suggestions, then share the poster and place it on the classroom wall.

**Say:** *We can make up our own posters too.*

This could be an individual, group or class project. Having this poster prominently displayed is an important reminder to everyone to become calm before trying to solve a problem.

Sharing and talking about the posters early in the year will help set the scene for a happier culture within the classroom, as well as introducing students to constructive, problem solving mindsets.

They can best be shared after Chapter 5 in The Magic Book, 'The Open Roads with Sid'

Introduce one **Open Road** and one Affirmation at a time.

**Ask:** *How would telling or reminding yourself of this Affirmation help you feel happier?*

Encourage the students to brainstorm, either as a class or in small teams.

### Ideas may include:

- I will feel stronger, healthier more powerful.
- I will solve problems easier
- I will keep safer
- I will feel better about myself
- I will make and keep friends
- I will be able to help others
- I will be more confident
- I will do my school work more easily
- I will learn more about myself and others
- I will have more fun
- I won't get so upset if things don't seem to work out for me

Use the ideas in this guide to regularly review and teach the affirmations. If anyone has a problem in the class, use this guide to identify an **Open Road** thought and brainstorm an action that would begin to solve the problem.



# DOUG DRAGSTER'S MAGIC BOOKS

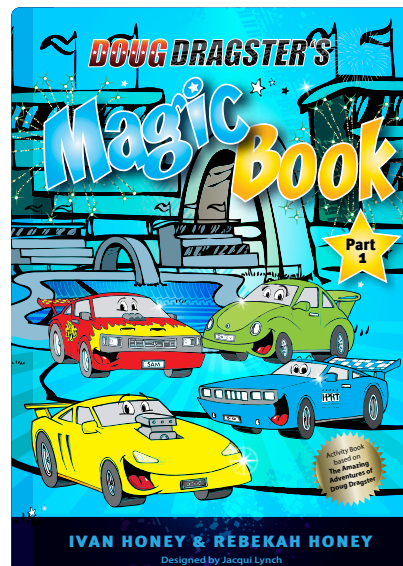


***The day we stop playing will be the day we stop learning***

William Glasser M.D.,  
Choice Theory: A New Psychology of Personal Freedom

# DOUG DRAGSTERS MAGIC BOOK AND POSTERS

The **Magic Book** also provides some interesting and fun ways of learning about how to get on well with others. In **Doug Dragster's Magic Book Part 1**, students will learn and understand how important rules are on the road. Likewise, in life, following appropriate rules will help us achieve success, happiness and survival. Working through the first chapters, your students will clearly understand and create the simple boundaries for behaviour. See the first 4 chapters of **Doug Dragster's Magic Book Part 1**. At the end of **Doug Dragster's Magic Book, Part 2**, and in the Subscriber Area of the website, you will find the **Magic Toolbox Checklist** as illustrated below. If you have it on the wall, students can use this as a guide to check their behavioural choices to get happier.



## Create some 'Get Happier Road Rules'

Have a discussion with the group to create a set of agreed '**Get Happier Ground Rules**' (especially for larger groups).

For example:

**Road Rule number 1:** Listen respectfully to what everyone has to share (before setting the rule, discuss what the word 'respectful' means with students).

**Road Rule number 2:** One person speaks at a time; raise your hand to speak, or use the 'talking spanner/wrench/steering wheel/or any item associated with a car'. Only the person with the item in their hands can speak, we wait for our own turn. Everyone who wishes to speak will get a turn.

**Road Rule number 3:** It's ok to disagree with an idea. Everyone has different opinions.

**Road Rule number 4:** There is no pressure on anyone to do or say anything they don't want to.

## Hints for Challenging Situations

- Until the ideal learning environment is achieved, there may be some challenging situations, which will prevent students engaging fully with the program. These guidelines will help you to maintain student's engagement with the program.
- It is helpful to ignore temporary minor distractions and give attention to those students who are on task.
- Be confident; keep the discussion moving, and maintain motivation by focusing on the next chapter of the book, i.e. "What do you think will happen next?"

If you demonstrate interest and motivation, the students will follow your lead and behave in a similar way. Stay calm when presented with challenges, and always remember to address the issues in a gentle, respectful manner. During discussion encourage students to express their ideas by showing appreciation of each contribution. If students propose ideas that are unethical or hurtful to others, simply **ask** them:

- *What could happen if someone did that...?*
- *What do others think...?*
- *How would you feel if that happened to you...?*
- *Encourage all contributions, no matter how small.*

Be flexible; be ready to vary the type of activity to relieve the tension and re-focus the group towards active learning. For example, be on the look-out for fidgeting and disengagement, and move into a physical or hands-on activity.

It is possible that at times, students may self-disclose or raise concerns that you do not feel equipped to answer. In such a case, suggest that they discuss their concerns with a school counsellor. Follow the procedures in your school or organization for this type of disclosure.

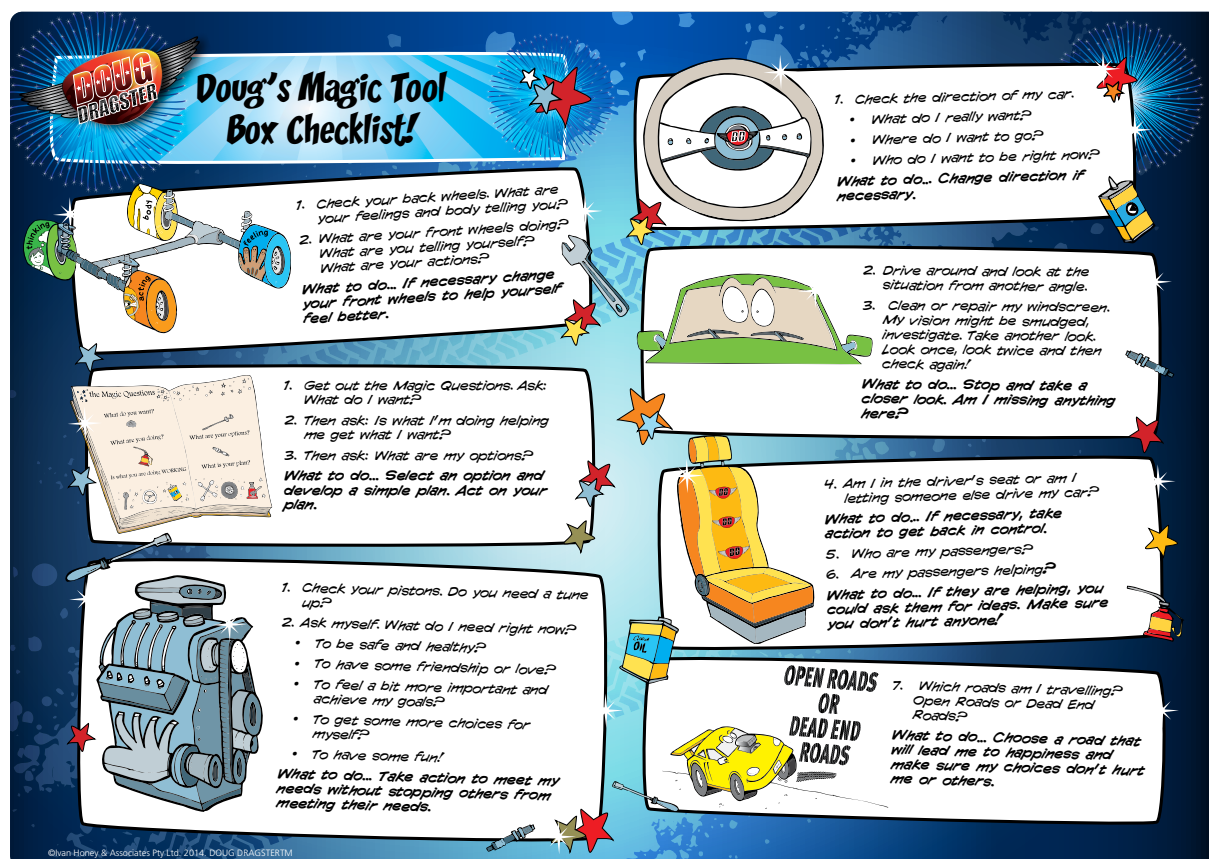
If students are seriously disengaged, speak with them away from the group to determine how you can help.

Regularly or, as required, refer to these road rules to reinforce the message: **Rules are about keeping ourselves safe, keeping our school fair and safe, and to help us get on well with others.**

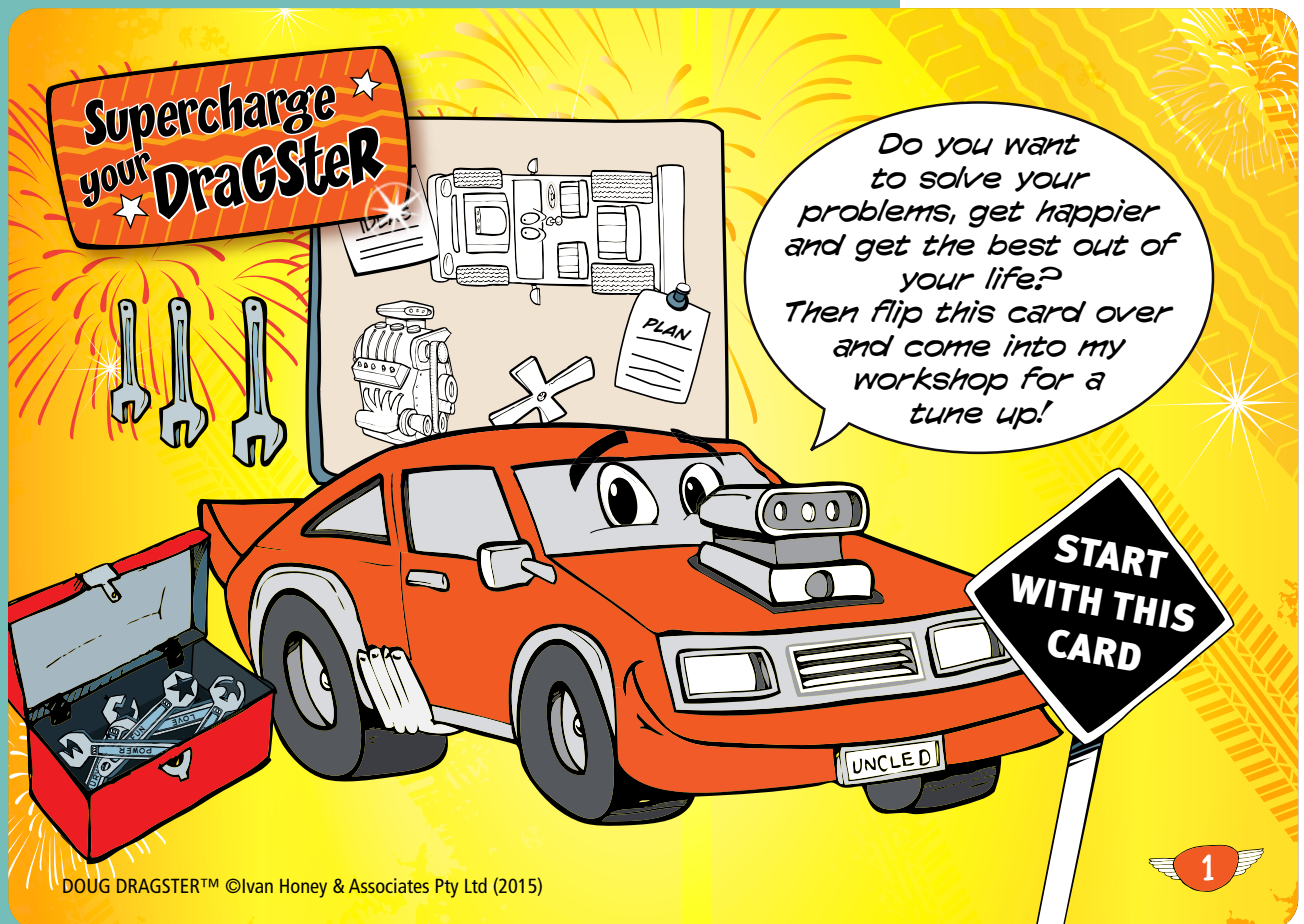
Students may also wish to add to their 'road rules' throughout the year as they become more aware.

A comprehensive summary or checklist is provided on pages 103–104 of **Doug Dragsters Magic Book Part 2**. It is also available as a downloadable chart from your subscriber area. When students are experiencing a challenge, they can check this chart and create a plan to take action to solve their problem or disagreement. This chart links in with the 'Supercharge Your Dragster' cards.

**As teachers, we can use the checklist too!**



# A REAL SCHOOL EXAMPLE



## My Job as a Teacher:

***'If you were to choose to harm yourself or others, it is my job to make sure that everyone is safe, and to help you learn to make a safer and happier choice'***

## A REAL SCHOOL EXAMPLE

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Many of our Get Happier Schools adapt the program to create their own unique behaviour management practices.

I would encourage you especially to visit Glendore Public School in Newcastle, Moama Anglican Grammar School, and Mudgeeraba Special School in the Gold Coast hinterland in Queensland, Australia.

The following is an summary of the exemplary work done by the Glendore Public School staff, as part of their Student Wellbeing protocols as they explain it to parents and as it is understood by students.

You can check this on their website:

<https://glendore-p.schools.nsw.gov.au/supporting-our-students/get-happier-project.html>

More examples are available on the School Snapshot area of the website, [www.gethappier.net](http://www.gethappier.net)

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## Student WELLBEING

At Glendore Public School, we utilise a range of teaching and behaviour management approaches and practices aimed at building positive behaviour and learning environments, while reducing the occurrence of challenging and unsafe behaviours through proactive and preventive approaches and providing better options for managing challenging behaviours when they do occur. Our school wellbeing approach is underpinned by William Glasser's Choice Theory and the 'Happier Schools Project'. Choice Theory is based around meeting the five basic human needs: Love, Fun, Freedom, Survival and Power.

During our weekly Happier School's lessons, students learn about travelling on Open Roads or Dead End Roads.

### OPEN ROADS

The Open Roads are connecting habits which are based on a mindset that focuses on controlling ourselves rather than controlling others. Open Roads help us to be happy and in control of our choices.

### DEAD END ROADS

Dead End Roads are disconnecting habits which can be harmful when used for too long or too often. It's natural for all people to find themselves choosing these habits when things don't go to plan.



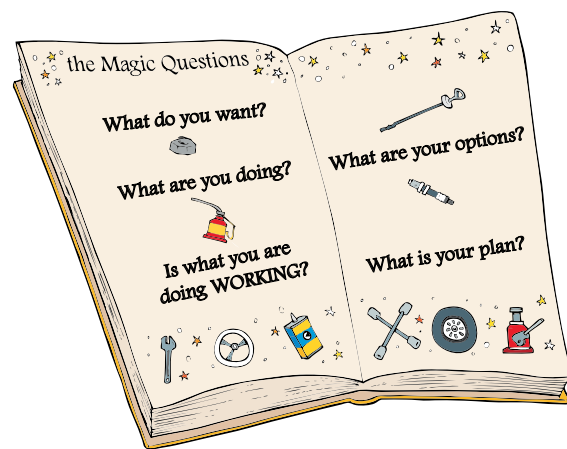


## MAGIC QUESTIONS

When students find themselves travelling on Dead End Roads, they are encouraged to consider the following questions to assist them with moving back to an Open Road:

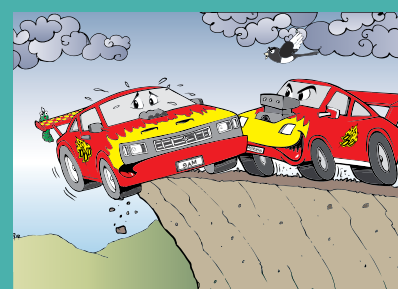
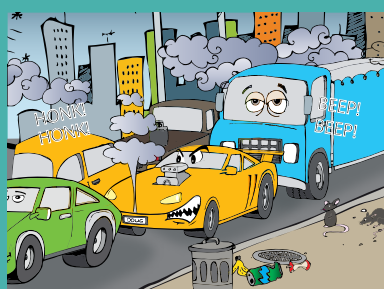
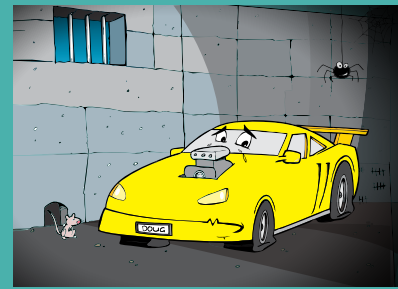
- What do you want?
- What are you doing?
- Is what you're doing working?
- What are your options?
- What is your plan?

Students can also use the 'Magic Tool Box Questions' as a further strategy when things aren't going as planned or perceived.



## WHAT CAR ARE YOU DRIVING?

To assist with student choice regulation, all Teachers utilise the 'What car are you driving' system in their classroom/learning environment.



All students start on the green car at the start of every day.

All students aim for green, blue or purple car by the end of the day.



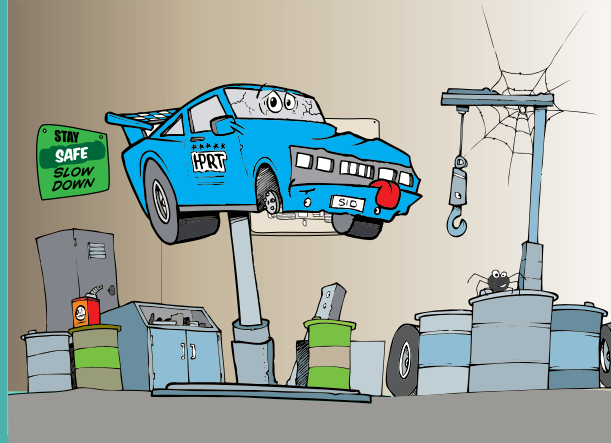
At times, students may be requested to attend pit stop and workshop to resolve incidents and develop proactive plans to reduce further incidents. To ensure learning time is not impacted, pit stop and workshop run at lunch and recess breaks.

## PIT STOP

Students who attend 'Pit Stop' are there so teachers and executive staff can investigate the incident.

It is a time for students to talk to an adult about what happened and to discuss the incident and their feelings.

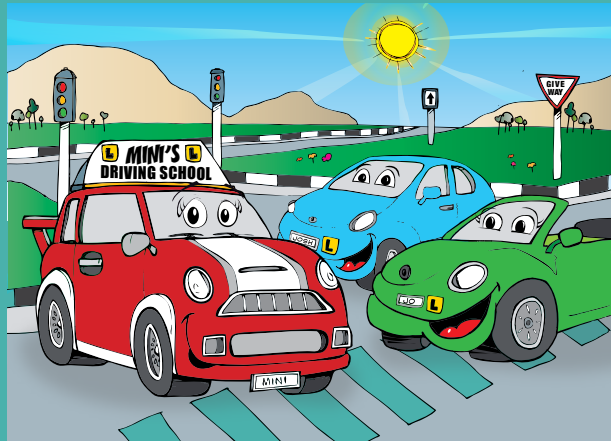
Witnesses are also asked to attend 'Pit Stop' so teachers know the whole incident.



## WORKSHOP

Students who attend 'Work Shop' are there to reflect on the incident and work out what went wrong.

Students work with a teacher to make a plan with strategies to help them on the playground to deal with all situations.



## STUDY GUIDE

### Questions and Activities for Discussion and Practice

#### Chapters 3 to 6

Congratulations on getting this far! Now you are finally into the first section of strategies that are aligned with what you're teaching students in the Get Happier School program.

If you are in a Get Happier school, you will find all the resources we talk about are readily available. If not, you can access all the resources at [www.gethappier.net](http://www.gethappier.net).

You'll have discovered that the approaches in this section take the form of light-hearted, fun and helpful conversations and questions that are **based on the axiom that we all want to be happy.**

Many of these approaches can be found in **Doug Dragster's Get Happier Toolbox cards and posters, and the Open Road Thoughts to Get Happier cards.**

They reinforce what the students are already learning, in particular being able to understand, name, and change feelings, and to evaluate their current choices so they can discover new possibilities.

You will discover that the students become more empowered and creative as they learn to evaluate their thoughts and actions.

The questions are deceptively simple and begin a therapeutic and practical conversation. The discussion always takes place in a kind and thoughtful way, avoiding any hint of coercion, judgement, or blame.

As students read the books, play the games, and learn the language of 'Dragster Psychology', the simple questions become the opportunity for students to self-evaluate and self-regulate.

This section is full of strategies and resources that are visual, related to cards and charts that are on the classroom wall, the stories, games, and activities that the students are using, and the signs that are around the school.

You can check the school snapshot area of the website to see some of these.

Any behaviour can be related to any one of the components that the students are learning:

**Here is a simple summary:**

We can use the **Open Road** cards and posters, along with the roundabout and the stop sign as a simple problem-solving process. The **Open Roads** are a framework for positive relationships and self-esteem:

We use questions such as;

- ***Are you on a dead-end road?***
- ***Will this choice make you happier?***
- ***Do you want to come to the roundabout to discover a happier choice?***
- ***Let's check out the stop sign!***

1. The **magic questions** are a simple set of self-evaluation questions to help solve problems. Create a lanyard with the magic questions attached for problem solving in the classroom and in the school grounds.

2. The **engine** is the metaphor for the basic needs. You can use questions such as :

***I wonder what need you were trying to meet?***

***Can you think of another way to meet this need?***

3. The **windscreen**, or our way of looking at the present situation is always powerful. We can reframe the situation by together identifying potential benefits and learnings, and we can always say:

***Maybe we need a break to relax, to give ourselves time to cool down and work out a better way to solve the problem.***

4. The **steering wheel** is always important to help clarify what we want. Too often, we waste time focussing on what we don't want!

***We can ask questions like:***

***What do you want right now? Why is it important? How do you want to feel? What do you want to achieve? How can I help you?***

5. The **driver's seat** questions are always helpful:

***Are you in the driver's seat? Are you trying to drive someone else's car? Are you letting someone else drive your car?***

6. The **four wheels**.

As students discover that their feelings are closely associated with their thought patterns, and that their mindsets will always create their feeling response, they are able to reflect on what they are telling themselves and to recognise they have other choices.

What can you tell yourself or do to help yourself feel better? ( if students are unable to articulate their feelings, you can use the images from the toolbox to help students select the picture of the dragster who is feeling like them.)

Finally, we look at an example of how one school has integrated the images and ideas from the program into their well-being policy.

Visit: [glendore-p.schools.nsw.gov.au/supporting-our-students/get-happier-project](https://glendore-p.schools.nsw.gov.au/supporting-our-students/get-happier-project)

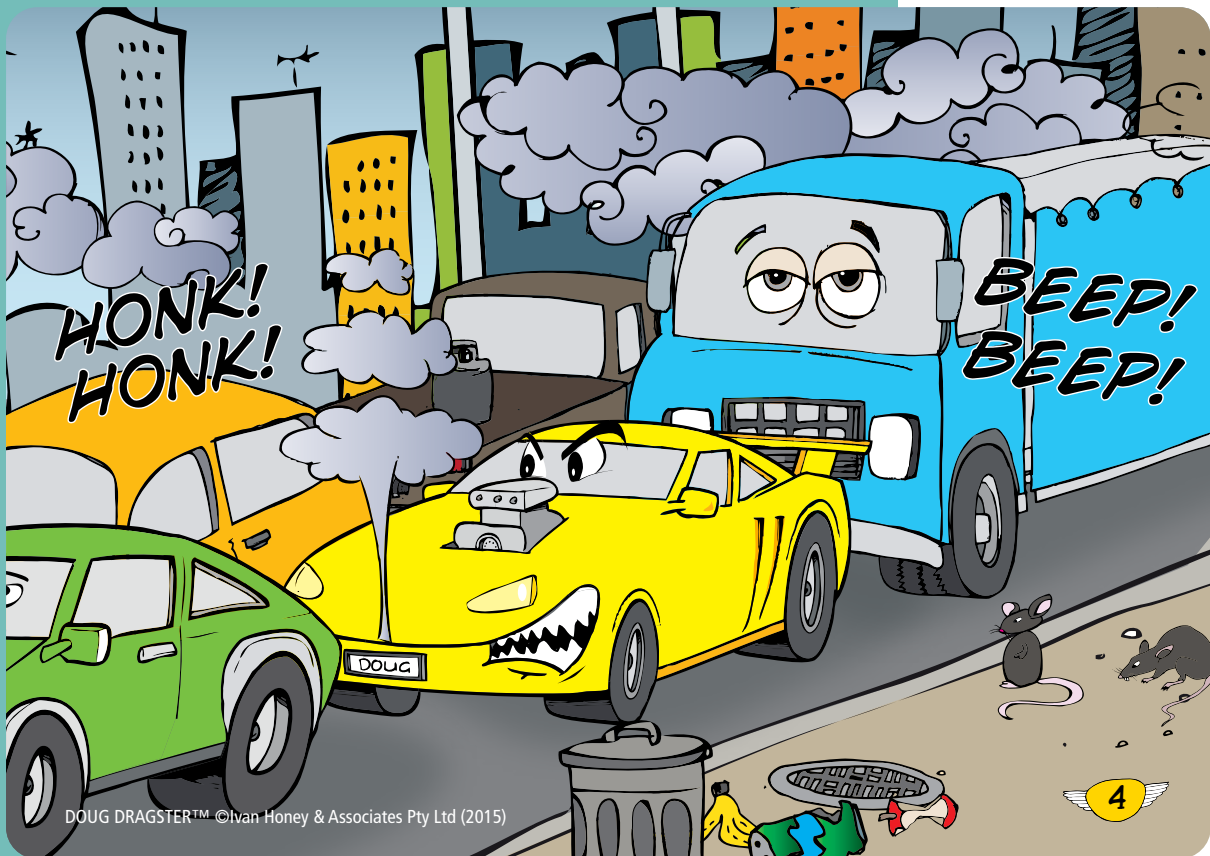
### Questions and Activities:

This is the intensely practical part of the book, where you use the card sets and posters to assist students to become self-managing.

1. **Open and Dead End Roads:** Enjoy Steve's game on page 44
2. In your team, role-play as many of the card activities as you can. This will give you practice and confidence in using these resources. One person will role-play the teacher, and the other role-play the student. Make sure you have a lot of fun as you practice these processes.
3. Look at the Cool Down Your Brain card in the **Open Road Thoughts to Get Happier** card set. Add your own ideas for cooling down your brain that you have used in your classroom.
4. At regular staff meetings, different staff members can share how they used the cards, or how they adapted the ideas for a challenging situation.
5. Have fun and improve connection with your colleagues and family by using these questions to support and encourage each other, by helping people help themselves.

**\* Remember to be discreet about using these questions and avoid using them when the other person is too emotionally distressed or out of control! Allow them to calm down first.**

# 62 TOP TIPS FOR CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT SUCCESS



***Effective teaching may be the hardest job there is'***

William Glasser M.D.,  
Choice Theory: A New Psychology of Personal Freedom

# 62 TOP TIPS FOR CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT SUCCESS

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## Conversations with Garry Garnaut and Linda Fothergill

The micro-skills and strategies listed below provide a helpful guide in many of the situations in which we find ourselves as teachers. You will discover strategies below that you will use tomorrow!

As we begin our conversation, just a quick reminder about managing a situation where a student is extremely emotionally distressed. We know that in such a state, the logical part of the brain cannot function effectively. In these situations, it is usually unhelpful to attempt discussion as it is likely to inflame the situation, as the brain is in fight or flight mode. Simply listen to the student or parent, give them space, and try to defuse the situation. You can return to the problem when things have settled, and everyone is calmer. Help the student to feel safe before you do too much!

**Garry Garnaut** is an expert practitioner in the skills of Choice Theory and Lead Management. After many years of successful experience as a teacher and as a school principal, Garry trains teachers around the world as a Senior Faculty member of the William Glasser Institute. He continues to work as a professional coach and counsellor and is a sought-after instructor in Lead Management. Garry lives in Adelaide, South Australia.

**Linda Fothergill** is a psychologist and a Choice Theory/Reality Therapy practitioner. During the past ten years, she has worked extensively with individual students within school settings. Previously, she worked with Ivan Honey and Associates, psychologists, in rehabilitation services and with Assessment Services. She shares some of her extensive experience and research.



*Ivan: I know body language is important. Garry, can you share some ideas about this with us?*

### 1 **Body language**

Body language or non-verbal communication refers to our facial expression, body gestures and how we use space and time. Between 65% and 85% of the message we are communicating is transmitted by our body language. Studies have shown students can accurately figure out what the teacher's non-verbal behaviour is communicating. Even if we are angry or annoyed, our tone of voice and what we say to students may be quite appropriate. However, body language such as the way we walk, and mannerisms such as scratching the chin when angry, hands on hip when annoyed or pointing the finger when frustrated, are often done without conscious thought.

You could ask a friend or colleague to tell you some of your unconscious habits of behaviour so your words and actions can become more in line.

You could also have fun with your students or better still, your students, by asking one of them to demonstrate how you act when upset, angry etc. They know us better than we know ourselves!

### 2 **Maintain eye contact**

It is helpful to keep our eye contact relaxed. Sometimes it is not necessary for the student to be looking at us (giving instructions is the exception here). Try and keep eye contact respectful, which means try not to stare.

### 3 **Respect their comfort zone**

Our comfort zone is usually about one metre with strangers. It can be slightly closer when approaching from the side or back.

If we are too close, the student is likely to express their discomfort by moving back a step or becoming more challenging because we have invaded their space. Teach your students the arm's length rule (which is keeping an arm's length away from others when talking to them). We all have a comfort zone that we expect others to respect. Likewise, if we are too far away from the student (over about 2 metres) it becomes a conversation between us and whoever else is nearby, usually the rest of the class. In this situation the student will, and so will you, find it difficult not to be distracted by other students nearby.

### 4 **Use a conversational tone**

If we control the loudness of our voice, it can have a calming effect on the student. If we raise our voice, it is more than likely the student will raise their voice. If we do raise our voice, there is a difference between assertively doing this, and doing it in such a way that it is loud and intimidating. When we yell at a student the message they often get is 'I am a bad person therefore I will respond as a bad person!'

In a classroom setting, delivering our message in a conversational voice, or as close to the student as we think practical, means other students are not drawn into a discussion which has nothing to do with them. It also means they must listen very intently if they are to hear what we are saying, which leads to a quiet classroom at a time when we probably most need it.

**Ivan:** Yes, I only yell in a situation where someone is in danger. Yelling only results in disconnection, resentment, or fear, and hence destroys the connection you need to achieve sustainable outcomes.

#### 5 **Be physically on their level**

This does not mean always ensuring that we are at the student's eye level. It does mean to try to be as close to the student's level as circumstances allow (like bending down if they are seated). When we can be on the student's level we are trying to work with the student in a way that indicates evenness and a sharing of power.

#### 6 **Anticipate emotional recoil escalation**

It happens without thinking when we are in an emotional or aroused state. Anticipate a rise in your emotional state, especially if you think the student intends to continue engaging you inappropriately. Remember the expectancy effect and try not to fall into bad habits we may have used in the past that are driven by our emotions. They almost always get us hooked into escalation with the student. Learning to work with a range of challenging student behaviours is not as easy as it sounds. Act professionally rather than personally.

**Ivan:** Just a reminder about the expectancy effect. If, for example, a student does not regard us as supportive, they will be unlikely to disclose or seek support. If they have seen us respond emotionally, they may either shrink back or hook you into a habitual emotional response!

#### 7 **After we have given instructions - MOVE AWAY**

Once an instruction or request is given to a student the teacher needs to move away. So often the teacher has done all the hard work and then spoils it all by standing over the student waiting for them to comply. When the teacher does this, it is giving the student the message 'I don't trust you to do what we agreed.' The student realises this and so acts as the teacher expects. The student says to themselves, 'You don't trust me, all right then I'll get you for this' and acts accordingly. The self-fulfilling prophecy! Many interactions with a student get out of hand because the teacher has forgotten or did not realise this simple yet important skill.

#### 8 **Expect to be tested; to be 'checked out'!**

Having moved away from a student you have been talking with, expect to be tested sometimes. The student may want to ensure that their co-operation is tempered with a sense of winning a little too! When you hear or see an under the breath comment; complaining; unwillingness to get on with the task at once etc., you need to try and not get hooked. The student is fishing, and the bait is well prepared! If you are able put up with it, let the student win a bit too! Even better, when you develop a relational/win-win culture in the classroom, you set up an environment where co-operation is the norm. That is the goal of the **Get Happier** classroom.

#### 9 **Private conversations**

Challenging behaviour escalates when the student perceives they are being criticised or manipulated. In the classroom this often occurs without the teacher realising they are doing it! When we talk to a student publicly in front of other students, the student is likely to feel embarrassed because their peers are seeing the event. This can increase the likelihood of challenging behaviours. Students in the class may agree with the teacher's actions but will be concerned by the public nature of the conversation. They may think 'How dare the teacher

behave that way, I wouldn't want the teacher to behave like that towards me!' At this point, it isn't uncommon for students in the class to begin to support the challenging student. The teacher begins to lose the respect of students who have never been a problem in class. It's important to have these conversations away from others.

**Ivan: Garry, what are the most effective words we can use to manage our classroom?**

**10 It never takes longer than 3 minutes**

From the moment a teacher notices a challenging behaviour, acts to deal with it and then disengages from the interaction it is usually no more than 3 minutes. Often it is shorter time frame than this. What the teacher does in these 3 minutes decides the course of events to follow. A teacher can learn skills to manage these 3 minutes successfully and significantly influence the course of events.

Of course, it will take a little longer if you are using some of Ivan's card sets. That is different because you have realised that the student needs to learn something about themselves, without which, simple reminders are a waste of time. So, choose a quiet time away from others to do this and do it in a friendly conversational manner. It is always about the student's understanding that it is all about getting happier.

**11 Avoid the Dead-End Road language especially criticism**

Always use the Open Road language to build relationships and influence. It's all we've got in the end. Remember that kids don't get paid to come to school and work!

**Avoid comments like:**

- *'Not you again,'*
- *'That's typical of what I expect from you...'*
- *'This is the third time this week...'*
- *'How many times do you have to be told?'*
- *'Can't you listen?'*
- *'I want quiet reading. Do you think for once you can do it?'*

**These comments are all criticising the student. When we criticise, we put the student down and the student is likely to get more annoyed and defend themselves or just turn off listening to us. Why listen to bad news!**

**12 The world will not end if...**

No matter how good a teacher we are, there will be times when it can feel like the students get the better of us. Remember that they, like us, are simply trying to meet their needs.

The world has not and will not end just because we didn't get our way on one occasion! Accept that in human affairs no one ever gets exactly what they want, so why should a teacher in the school setting be any different to the rest of the human population? It is at times like this it is helpful to put the event into perspective. We can also seek the support of our trusted colleagues to assist us in regaining confidence and balance. Ask ourselves the **Magic Questions:**

- *What do I want?*
- *What am I doing?*

- *Is it working?*
- *If not, will I stop doing it?* (If you won't change, then put up with the pain you are experiencing and get on with it!)
- *What will I replace it with?*

**Ivan:** This is good Garry. We need to recognise our own patterns of self-talk when we catastrophise over a mistake we make or keep imagining the worst. We are all human! The only problem is if we keep making the same mistake and do nothing to rectify it.

13

### Focus on present actions and thoughts

Behaviour change begins with awareness of the current behaviour. Focusing on the past often results in excuses, blame and helplessness. While it is important to hear the feelings expressed by the student, we then move to explore the concurrent actions and thoughts. Focus on present behaviour and plan for the future. When talking about present behaviour, focus on what the student is doing and thinking. Ask the student to evaluate their own behaviour. This creates ownership.

#### Ask questions such as:

- *What are you doing right now?*
- *Are you in the driver's seat?*
- *Are you on an open road?*
- *Will this really make you happier?*
- *Is what you are doing responsible?*
- *What do you need to start doing?*
- *Will you do it?*
- *When will you do it?*

Keep being solution focused. What happened yesterday is the past. Your focus as the teacher is lost if you allow the conversation with the student to stay in the past. You can be diverted from the real issue and find yourself uncertain as to why you wanted to talk to the student in the first place!

This occurs when a conversation with a student sounds like:

Garry: *'George is hurt. What were you doing?'*

Student: *'I was going to the canteen, when I was pushed from behind.'*

Garry: *'What did you do when you were pushed?'*

Student: *'Nothing! I was minding my own business when it happened. It happened the same way yesterday!'*

Garry: *'Oh, what happened yesterday?'*

Student: *'Well, I was minding my own business as I always do, and this kid just pushed me and...'*

If the teacher is not careful the student will divert the teacher from the original intention for the teacher having the conversation.

It is important to listen to the student's story. Let the student be heard and then bring them back to the subject at hand. If we want to assist the student choose more responsible behaviours, then we must encourage the student to maintain focus on the issue at hand.

**Ivan:** Look at the problem-solving process of the Four Wheels in the Doug Dragster's Get Happier Toolbox Instruction Book, (page 21), to use a visual system so students can learn to solve their own problems too. There is also a problem solving process using the 'Open Road Thoughts to Get Happier' cards. These processes will build sustainable skills for the students which over time will empower them to solve their own problems. It also makes it easier and safer to name feelings and recognise you can change them. When you use this process, students feel that you have heard their feelings, and learn to manage feelings by changing their thoughts and actions. The very nature of these questions discourage a focus on the past!

#### 14 Let the student tell their story

The student's story always needs to be listened to. The student may have a story that seems incorrect, but it is their story, and it needs to be listened to too. As we know, in any situation, everyone's perception of an event will differ. So, allow the student to have a say, to have airtime. Appropriate airtime is usually never longer than a few minutes. When the student's side of the story is not heard they are more likely to react negatively. Respecting the student's story indicates appreciation of their perception of events, which may promote the conditions to resolve differences peacefully.

#### 15 Use humour

When it seems as though it is all falling apart, humour can often save the day. Humour is always directed at yourself or objects around you. It is never directed at the student or anything to do with the student. Who knows what they may take offence at? Laughter or a positive thought usually makes it impossible to keep mad. If you use humour it can become an important strategy in defusing what appears at first glance to be an awkward situation. Not everyone likes to use humour. However, if you like to use humour, it will most likely work for you.

**Ivan:** Garry, do you have some hints around what worked best for you as a teacher?

#### 16 Never give up... Hang-in there longer than the student thinks you will

Giving up by a student sounds like:

- 'I forgot!'
- 'The plan was too hard!'
- 'I can't, you know that everyone hates me!'

If we expect a student to do as we ask, avoid being a perfectionist and expecting them to do it the instant you ask, or even most of the time. That is just not how it happens! The student who isn't a problem will become a problem. The student who is causing you problems is likely to take longer. Almost always the student's irresponsible behaviour is such that it seems easier for you to just give up! The student seems to want you to! If we give in too early though, we are more than likely reinforcing what they already know. *'I am useless, and you have given up just like everybody else does, why bother trying to do the right thing?'* This student is already an expert at giving up, so avoid playing their game and rubbing salt into their already damaged ego.

Never giving up means hanging in there longer than the student thinks we will. Each of us must decide how long this is. There is no formula, only what we are prepared to persevere and be persistent with. It takes energy to work with challenging student behaviour; there are no quick remedies. When plans are not working, keep the relationship with the student positive. Maintain the involvement, the bridge to eventual co-operation.

**Ivan:** I worked with students who claimed to hate their teacher because she followed everything up. By the end of the year, they loved her because they recognised she cared enough to follow through!

### 17 Own your own behaviour

No one can make you do anything unless you want to. Generally, you will do something for another person if you:

- think you will get something you want by complying / agreeing,
- you don't mind what the outcome of the situation is, or
- you fear the person or what they may do if you do not comply / agree.

Whenever we interact with a student, we need to take responsibility for our own behaviour. We may unintentionally worsen the challenging student behaviour by our actions. This means we should stay calm and in control of our own actions. How we behave as teachers is the key factor in successful student and classroom management. To improve this skill, I have researched various strategies, often using the mindfulness techniques I teach the students.

**Ivan:** When we accept that we can only control our own behaviour, we are able to discover some of our own patterns that contribute to our frustration or anger. They include unrealistic beliefs about being perfect, never making mistakes, and the idea that we must be in control all the time!

### 18 Ignore for too long at your peril

Ignoring challenging behaviour for too long can lead to an escalation of the behaviour. Thinking 'it will go away if I ignore it', is setting up a confrontation. Eventually, we reach the end of our ability to ignore and will 'burst out' at the student, leading to a spiraling escalation. The student may begin to 'set the teacher up' to perform. Ignoring is a useful strategy in the short term provided the student has the maturity to interpret your ignoring as a way of showing your confidence in their ability to return to task. For the challenging student though, ignoring is too easily interpreted as the teacher does not care or the teacher has not noticed yet!

### 19 Listen to what the student is saying

Listening means fully attending. A habit that many of us develop is to be thinking about what we want to say next, and we are not listening to the other person. A good way to show a student you are listening to them is to repeat in your own words what you hear them saying (paraphrasing). The student who knows what they are saying is being heard is more likely to want to compromise to work out a solution.

**Ivan:** Garry, we talked about managing and being in the present. Do you have some tips about planning for student behaviour change? In the Get Happier School Project, we find the 4 wheels 2 Get Happier process works really well.

### 20 Focus on working with one student at a time

Each student in the class usually has allies who will come to their rescue, particularly when we are attempting to sort out an issue with a particular student. If we engage a student with the intent of discussing a sensitive behaviour issue, it is helpful to do this away from the class, using some of the Get Happier strategies. Otherwise, you can find yourself moving from student to



student trying to put out 'spot fires'. When you start doing this, any sense of order in your actions will disappear.

The exception to this is when it is safe to discuss a common issue with the whole class.

### 21 **Develop a plan that is realistic and achievable**

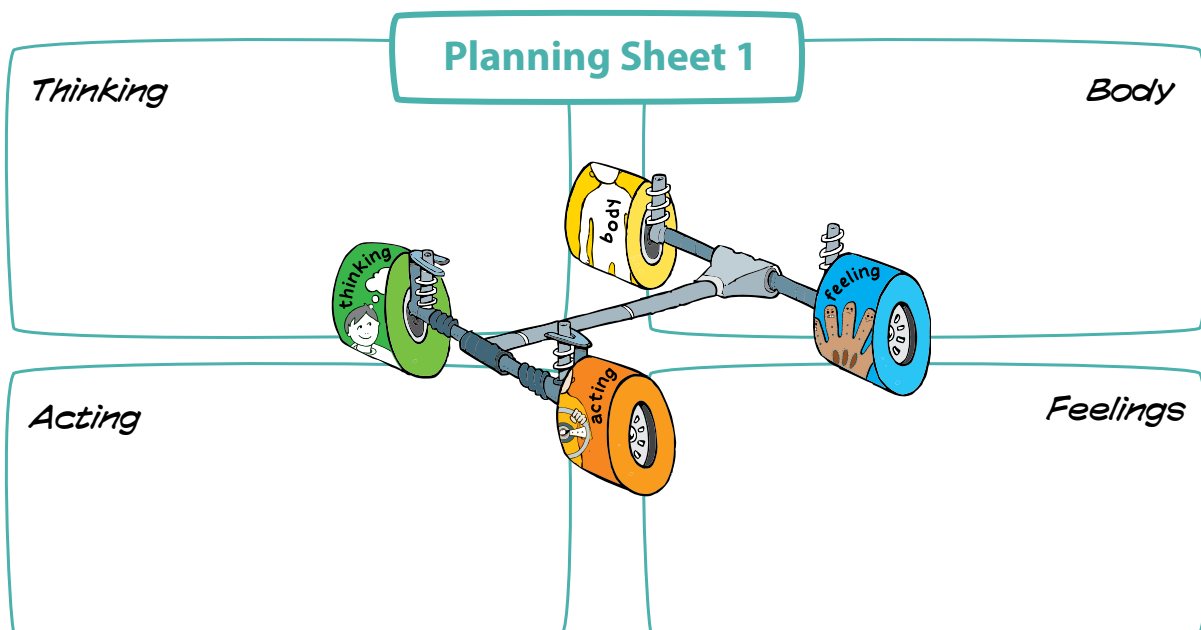
A realistic plan has at least an 80% chance of being successful. To ask a student to make a plan that is going to require an outstanding effort may be fine for the teacher to expect. The student though may find the contract impossible. Why make a plan that the student can't do! It is doomed to failure before you start. Build success into every plan. Plans need to be kept simple with short spans of time until review occurs. A good plan is a plan that includes an observable and measurable action.

An achievable plan can be carried out today, does not require other people to behave in a certain way, and requires no other resources except those the student would reasonably have at hand.

### 22 **Get commitment to a plan**

The shake of a hand, a wink, a written contract, a thumbs up sign, a smile with the nod of the head is about commitment to a plan. Always ensure there is a commitment. If we don't, then the student has really made no agreement. Commitment is always time limited with an agreed time fixed to review the plan. Planning is about working out choices and then selecting a course of action.

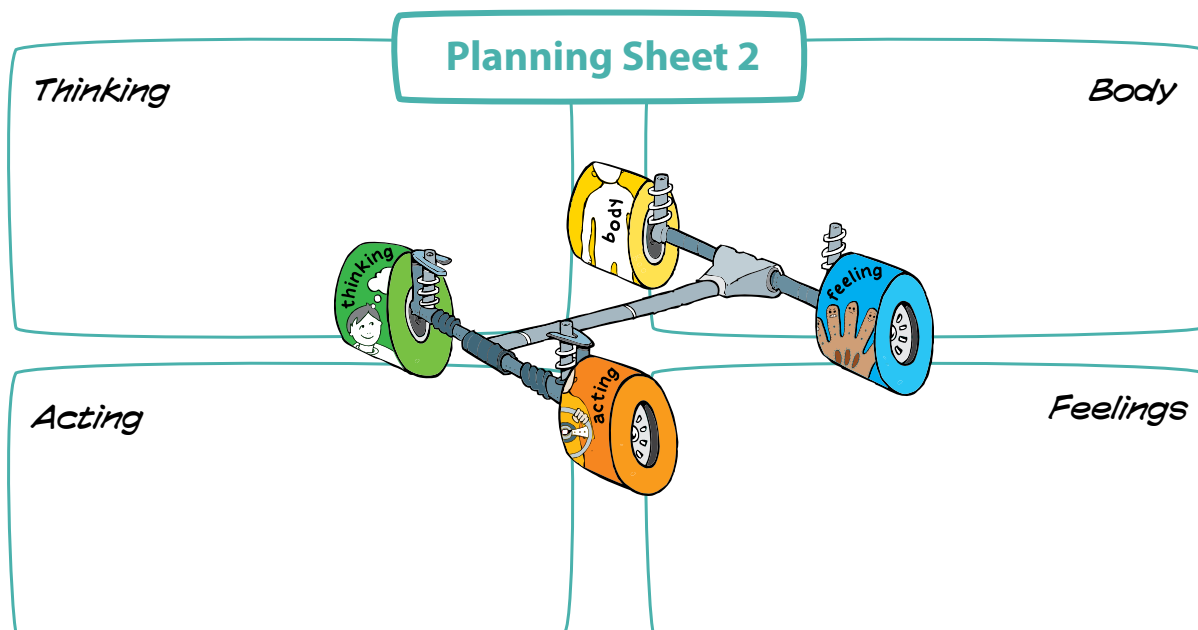
If a plan did not work then it is time to review and replan, not blame. If we want a student to change, then expect them to make mistakes as they practice new behaviours. Treat them as we would the student who did not get the equation right the first or even the second, or third time! Let them try again. Generally, after three tries at one plan it requires a rethink because it is floundering. Throwing the plan out is rarely the answer. In changing the plan, the idea is to decide together (student and teacher) on modifications to make success more attainable. Work with the student to determine acceptable ways for encouraging and rewarding success. Successful steps are always very small.



**Name of this Dragster:** .....

Do you want to stay in this Dragster?

Choose a new Dragster which shows how you would like to feel.



**Name of the Dragster:** .....

Which Dragster would you rather be? If you want to feel better, follow the plan and practise the new actions and thoughts every day!

### 23 Self-evaluation

Use the Magic Questions to ask the student to evaluate his or her own behaviour. The key question here is, *'Is what you are doing helping or hurting you?'* A response from the student (a value judgement) is essential otherwise the student is not involved. We are doing the talking and making the plan. The student is not! A value judgement by the student can take time to arrive at. It is worth the effort because it is developing the student's ability to self-evaluate. The ability to self-evaluate is crucial in any behavioural change.

**Ivan:** Yes, the card sets in the Get Happier School Project enhance respectful relationships, as well as metacognitive skills, creativity, and connection. Asking questions and having the student self-evaluate their behaviour is always more helpful than telling or lecturing.

**Ivan:** Garry, I know that you really emphasise teamwork in organisations. What are your thoughts about this?

### 24 Teaching can be a stressful occupation

It can be stressful because the teacher is managing the behaviour of a group of students and is also engaging in teaching. A less stressful environment exists when the teacher realises that there will always be interactions with students, which can turn out badly, disastrously or terribly. That's life, or more to the point, that's teaching. You win lots and sometimes you lose some. Expect it to happen this way, prepare for it and when it does happen recognise you did your best, you did your job. A professional teacher understands it can hurt heaps when working with students whose needs are not being met, and have your best effort seemingly thrown back in your face. Wear it professionally not personally.

**Ivan:** 'The Four Agreements' from Don Miguel Ruiz\* are a great summary of the behaviours and mindsets that can guide our behavioural responses as an emotionally intelligent manager. This is a little book that is worth reading.

Taking student behaviours personally will create a lot of stress and will harm our relationships with students.

- Be impeccable with your word.
- Don't take anything personally.
- Don't make assumptions.
- Always do your best.

### 25 **Teacher behaviour is the decisive element in empowering students**

The teacher is the decisive element. What we do, how it is said, our body language and willingness to work with the student rather than doing things to or for the student, can have profound influence on a student's behaviour. The student learns to focus on their own behaviour and take responsibility for it.

### 26 **Trust your colleagues**

Trusting our colleagues means we believe they know what they are doing when working with a student. When we interrupt an exchange between a student and a colleague because we think we know what needs to happen, we are interfering in a conversation that did not include us, and that undermines the rights of the student and the colleague to sort things out for themselves.

### 27 **Ask your colleague if they want your advice / help when working with a student**

When a colleague is working with a student it is important to respect their professional integrity. No matter how the dialogue between teacher and student is progressing it is important always to seek permission from your colleague to intervene. (This may not be possible in a situation where there is physical danger to a person or property.)

When the colleague is not asked:

- their confidence to sort things out for themselves is undermined,
- it gives an impression to the student that the staff do not trust each other and don't know how to work together when the situation becomes demanding,
- impedes collaboration and teamwork that leads to teaching becoming a tiresome and lonely job,
- and provides the student with the ability to undermine efforts to manage them and develop their responsible behaviour.

### 28 **When you are not sure, ask a colleague**

When managing a student or a class of students, it is easy to lose track of where you are at in the student management system, or become hesitant and uncertain as to what to do next. When this occurs and you begin to think that you are not in control, you may find yourself trying to coerce the student to behave. If this pattern keeps repeating itself, the result can be disastrous for your student management practice.

Teachers too often go it alone and suffer alone. Be willing to ask a colleague for advice and or support. Asking is a sign of a willingness to learn and is a risk-taking behaviour to be valued.

Students need to see this risk-taking behaviour practiced. It is highly appropriate to seek advice and/or support in front of students so that they can see us modelling what we believe, rather than acting impulsively and regretting it later! Seeking advice and or support before acting can mean the difference between an uncontrollable escalation of a situation and managing it successfully.

When we seek a colleague's advice and/or support our action strengthens teamwork and most importantly the creative, non-coercive risk-taking behaviours necessary when working with students who we find challenging to work with.

**Ivan:** Yes, although we may feel rushed, it is wise to give ourselves time to think before acting. It gives us time to calm down and think more clearly. We can delay our response to most situations, which also gives the other party time to cool down and think. When we believe that every situation requires a quick and clever response, we set ourselves up with a hasty decision we will probably later regret!

### 29 Peer support

Teaching can be a lonely job. It is a disastrous job if the teacher is also working with students whose behaviour is challenging and there is no support in place. The effective leadership team encourages and actively supports program teams to make decisions about their students. Teams are empowered when they know their actions are professional and supported.

### 30 If the system won't change and you are a part of the system, how will you change?

Systems or teams that we work in or work with generally change slowly. They have a habit of perpetuating their existence and almost resisting all attempts to change them. Don't wait for a system to change so that things will get better. Nothing will happen; we will die waiting!

Systems change when people in them change. Critical mass for system change happens when the leadership and 50% of the team want to see change and act. Critical mass though is reached by individuals self-evaluating their behaviour and changing their behaviour. Modelling is the best way to influence people. Not only talk-the-talk but also be willing and able to walk-the-walk. We handle our own behaviour. What we choose to do is very important.

**Ivan:** Garry, you talk a lot about relationships. How do you go about this?

### 31 Be personal; build involvement with the student

Students need to know the teacher as a person before they will respect them as a teacher. Talking about interests, hobbies, likes and dislikes, what you do on weekends, sports, family and so on break down barriers. There is no need to tell it all, only talk about what is comfortable to share. When the teacher gets personal in this way they are saying to the student: 'I care enough about you to be involved, to be friendly'. Spend time every day encouraging involvement. Students need to know the teacher is more than a Maths, an English or whatever teacher. Students want to know the teacher as a person too. The student wants to figure out if they can trust the teacher! We all have a need for Belonging and Fun. Building connections in this way is comparable to saving money for a rainy day. It is hard for a student to sustain challenging behaviour when there is a positive relationship existing with the teacher.

At the same time, we build involvement by learning about each student as a person; their likes and dislikes, their goals and dreams and discovering how we can assist them to meet their needs.

### 32 **Maintain respect with students**

Being clear with students by focusing on what we both want and what we will do builds mutual respect.

- a. *'I want you to get it right and I am prepared to help you figure it out.'*
- b. *'I'm not sure what to do, can you tell me what you want?'*

It makes things a lot easier if we know the student before a challenging incident. Always use the student's first name. It is a signal that we respect them and build rapport. If we don't know the student, we ask them their name and tell them who we are. Don't assume because it makes 'an ass of you and me!'

No matter what the student says or does, seek to maintain our own dignity and speak politely without criticising them. To do otherwise is to focus the student on a red herring, our behaviour.

At the same time, it is important to say and act as we see it at the time. If we act as though the incident doesn't bother us, our body language will give us away. Loud voice; stern look; demanding an action by the student all have a place and are the legitimate right of a teacher to use in a dangerous situation. As a professional we must work out the most appropriate way for dealing with each incident with a student. The more we as a professional lean towards being respectful and personable, the more we put the responsibility on the student to deal with us in the same way.

### 33 **Use silence (think time)**

Research has proven that as much as 75% of class time is verbal discussion with 70% of this time dominated by the teacher. In dealing with challenging student behaviour, it is common for the teacher to do the talking. The student often finds it difficult to have a say. If we want a student to choose responsible behaviour, then give them time to figure out what they will do next. If we listen, then we create an opportunity to enable the student to calm down, and thus avoid an escalation in challenging behaviour.

### 34 **Emotional discharge**

This means giving the student time to calm down. Escalation in a difficult situation occurs when our intervention is too soon. The student is yet to calm down. The teacher exercises their professional judgement and may offer the student time by themselves to think it out. This does not excuse the student's behaviour. It delays (timing) intervention to a time when the student is behaving in a way that shows they are in control of the emotional part of their behaviour. The 'Cool Down Your Brain' card in the Open Road Thoughts to Get Happier' card set can help here.

### 35 **Disengagement**

When an instruction is given to a student, allow the student a short time/period to choose their next behaviour. This requires us to disengage from the interaction with the student. The student needs think time to figure out what they want to do with your request. A half a minute or even a whole minute (or more) of thinking time is allowing the student to exercise choice. To do less is to engage in a lock step approach to management, which can lead to a rapidly deteriorating interaction.

### 36 **Resolution as distinct from management**

Resolution with a student is about seeking a win-win solution. The teacher focuses on assisting the student to own their behaviour and develop a plan to behave appropriately. The teacher engages in a mini counselling session with the Magic Questions and asks additional questions such as: *'What are you doing?'* *'What is your responsibility?'* *'What will you do now?'* *'What will happen if you continue to behave this way?'* *'Which choice will help you feel happier?'*

Resolution aims to help the student to make value judgements about their behaviour. If the student isn't willing to answer the questions, to make value judgements about what they are doing, then the plan that is made is one the teacher has agreed to but to which the student has no ownership.

Management with a student focuses on us being decisive. There is no attempt in the immediate situation to seek resolution. Our professional judgement results in us concluding the student's behaviour requires immediate action, and any attempts at resolution are considered inappropriate. We do not provoke or criticize the student. We ensure that we are operating out of a professional perspective, and not from a feeling of personal anger and frustration. When we operate out of personal anger and / or frustration, the thinking is often 'How dare you!' or 'No student behaves like that in my presence' or 'It's not fair, I deserve better than this'.

**Ivan: Garry, how do you set the scene for classroom management?**

37

### **Continual reference to the learning and social responsibilities of students and staff**

Formulation of an agreed set of responsibilities for staff and students is important. The open roads are the basis for all successful interaction. Staff need to agree to these and ensure their behaviour towards students occurs within the context of the defined responsibilities. Students want to see fairness in practice. When what they experience implies, 'Do as I say not what I do' the students begin to think 'I do what I want, never what you say.' Regular discussion must occur amongst students and with teachers about these agreed responsibilities.

38

### **Make sure that the student knows and understands the classroom responsibility system**

(Responsibility System is a more accurate description than a Discipline System)

*Does the student know (can tell you without prompting) your classroom 'responsibility system'?*

Too often a teacher and student interaction becomes messy because the student was not aware (had not been taught) what you would do if they continued to make inappropriate choices. Consequences need to be negotiated and understood by the student before there is any need to use them. Springing unknown surprises on a student usually results in an argument if the student feels what you are doing seems unfair.

Using the broad guidelines in Chapter 3 in 'Doug Dragster's Magic Book' is always a great basic reference for students and staff. I know that the Get Happier School Project teaches and reinforces these boundaries as soon as students begin school.



39

### **The student experiences the logical consequences of their actions**

(Consequences must be delivered in a kind and friendly way.)

**Ivan:** Yes, we all experience the logical consequences of our choices. If we eat unwisely, we feel sick: if we don't get adequate sleep, we feel tired the next day: if we run around thoughtlessly, we increase our likelihood of hurting ourselves or others. These ideas are part of the classroom discussions in the Get Happier Curriculum so it makes it easier for students to understand. They learn that we have road rules to keep us safe. If people drive dangerously and hurt others and themselves, they are required to learn safer and responsible behaviours. When they have done this, they can return to driving again. The Get Happier program actually teaches and reinforces the respect required by drivers to follow road rules and drive safely!



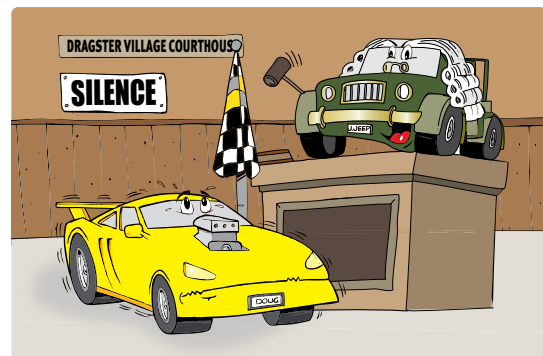
Yes, students need to experience the logical consequence of their behaviour. Otherwise, they grow up without any realistic appreciation of the effects of their behaviour! Logical consequences in the classroom do not result in fear or pain. Our follow-up needs to be immediate, otherwise it lacks meaning. Consequences that are logical relate to the event. The most important thing students want to experience is that consequences are applied fairly, consistently, related to the event, and make sense. A logical consequence usually involves a choice to make things right. An illogical consequence is a consequence that is unrelated. For example, 'One hundred lines for talking!' An illogical consequence is done to the student and does not involve the student in learning a more effective behaviour or fixing things up.

A logical consequence is known to the student before it is introduced, is related to what has happened and makes sense to the student. After the event, don't feel sorry for the student. They knew the consequence of their action and have a right to its logical outcome. This is the way we have learnt many things. When the student behaves responsibly, acknowledge their effort with enthusiasm and support. Good effort is too often ignored. Whenever the opportunity presents itself put petrol in the student's tank of self-esteem.

40

### Avoid punishment

Punishment removes responsibility from the student. Punishment is done to the student. It usually involves the threat or use of power. To live a good life, the student must learn they are responsible for themselves. Punishment says, 'I am hurt by what you did, and I will get you back for what you have done.' Punishment is the opposite of a logical consequence; it has nothing to do with what happened and does not make up for the damage. Punishment focuses on the person not the deed. It does not teach the student what to do instead of the poor choice.



Punishment only works when the student fears the punishment, when they are unwilling to buck the system, or they don't care about being punished. When these factors are absent, then the student resists being punished passively and quite often actively. Punishment takes away from the need for freedom, it doesn't teach anything about responsibility. It does teach the need to be cleverer the next time, so you do not get caught. '*Nothing works with that student*' is a recognition that punishment is not working. It is important that staff clearly articulate to students that strategies such as Think Time and Decision Time are not punishments. They are opportunities for the student to work through the issue, aim for good choices and move forward. Providing some mindful activity while the student settles down is often helpful.

41

### Excuses avoid responsibility

Excuses by a student as to why they can't do a plan are about avoiding responsibility. It involves game playing and can often lead to diverting focus from the real issue. Focus the discussion with the student on what they will do, not on what they won't or can't do. Let them have a say but keep their excuse talking to a minimum. Too long on excuses and the student, and then the teacher, will begin to believe the excuse. The teacher needs to be positive and confident with the student and convey a belief that the student can do it.

42

### Patterning

Patterning implies frequent rehearsal with a student when a new behaviour is being taught. This requires patience and perseverance by us and acceptance that new behaviours are learnt through a process of trial and error. Mistakes, sometimes the same one frequently, are made before a new behaviour is learnt. In Maths, if a process is not learnt, then encouragement, practice and

alternative strategies are used to develop the skill in the student. The same too when students are learning new behaviours. Old habits die slowly!

Don't expect miracles from a student. Expect them to take time to integrate new behaviours into their behavioural system. Students with low self-esteem will make lots of mistakes - that is how they have learnt to cope in the world!

**Ivan: Garry, can you share some of the beliefs that are behind your strategies?**

43

### **Professional behaviour rather than emotional behaviour**

As I have said, the professional teacher is willing and able to distinguish between behaving professionally and behaving emotionally when working with students. Professional behaviour by the teacher ensures we are not being driven by negative feelings. When negative feelings drive behaviour, it may result in inappropriate responses when attempting to manage a student. This is particularly so when the student's behaviour is highly emotive and feeling driven. Professional and positive self-talk is an essential basis for professional action. When we and our students internalise the language of the 'Open Road Thoughts to Get Happier' cards, we will more automatically act in a professional way.

44

### **A self-fulfilling prophecy**

The expectancy effect or self-fulfilling prophecy results in the belief that what you think, will actually occur. Many teachers can talk about predicting disaster with a student or class and then when it actually occurs, not understanding that our expectations have contributed toward the outcome. When we say, *'I feel angry with that student'*, then there will be physiological behaviour, thinking behaviour and acting behaviour that is matched.

If we feel angry, we may think 'How dare they!', then physiologically sense a knot in the stomach and clench our fists and do something like yell at those we are angry at. When the teacher enters the classroom and automatically looks to the seat in the back corner to see if 'that' student is there, it is a prediction of impending disaster, a self-fulfilling prophecy. Challenging student behaviour tends to cause the thinking processes of many teachers to go haywire. To avoid this thinking requires us to believe we are a competent, worthwhile teacher, able to manage the students professionally, and this is backed up by a classroom and site wide management plan.

When we engage a student, we need to think they will respond well. If we think this will not work, then our body language and what we do will support what we think. The student will detect our uncertainty and will respond with uncertainty just as they perceive us doing. The result will more than likely be what we thought, "It won't work!" When we think the student can behave, then our own positive body language will convey an accurate set of cues that sends clear messages to the student that tells the student we care. It sets up a positive expectation effect.

### **Good questions to ask ourselves when working with the student:**

- *'Are my needs being met?'* (Belonging, Personal, Power, Freedom, Fun and Safety)
- *'What is the worst thing that could happen?'*
- *'Am I taking myself too seriously?'*
- *'What am I learning from this situation?'*
- *'If things are really serious, will I be okay for the next 3 minutes?'*

Learning to manage our thoughts constructively is a lifetime process. I make sure that I have a written list of positive thoughts and questions that I keep updating and practicing!

45

### The use of power

When the teacher looks to use Legitimate Power ('I am the teacher and therefore the boss') or Coercive Power ('Do it or else') the outcome may be an escalation of the challenging behaviour. Change in behaviour is the responsibility of the individual. Whilst you can force a student to change, the effectiveness of the change and residual retaliation at the imposition of force is likely to negate any positive effect. The threat of more lines, extra detentions, or the time out room time and again does not improve things.

In contrast, the use of Expert Power (the knowledge and skill the teacher uses to teach the curriculum) and Referent Power (the teacher's ability to be valued by the students and assist the student to meet their need for belonging), provides the student with a real choice. The choice becomes for the student to behave irresponsibly towards the teacher who the student respects and likes, or to behave in a responsible manner because of the positive relationship that exists with the teacher. The outcome can't be predicted. However, if the teacher is not using Legitimate Power and Coercive Power to solve problems in the classroom, then there is a greater likelihood that the student will respond in a co-operative manner.

We all need power. To believe a student of any age will readily accept a subservient position to us is an error. If the student believes we have something to offer them or fears our authority, then they will generally let us use our power to control them. But many students do not live by this premise and all attempts by us to use our power to control them will be challenged either passively or through active resistance. When working with students it is vital to remember the student needs power too. Give it to them otherwise they will take it from you. Almost all clashes with students occur because students resist being 'bossed' by the teacher.

46

### Never give up

Each of us must define 'never' for ourselves. A good basic rule of thumb is to 'hang in there longer than the student thinks you will'. With complex and challenging students, it means a period of one to three months!

**Ivan:** Thank you so much Garry for your insights. This is such an awesome list of ideas and I can see that it is the result of many years of experience!

**Garry** says, 'Thanks Ivan, it was great to talk with you. Here is one of my favourite quotes from Dr Glasser to finish off'...

***If everyone could learn that what is right for me does not make it right for anyone else, the world would be a much happier place.***

William Glasser M.D.,  
Choice Theory: A New Psychology of Personal Freedom

**Ivan:** We know that when students love to learn they have little interest in disrupting the class. Linda, what does research say about how we best help students keep focused on learning?

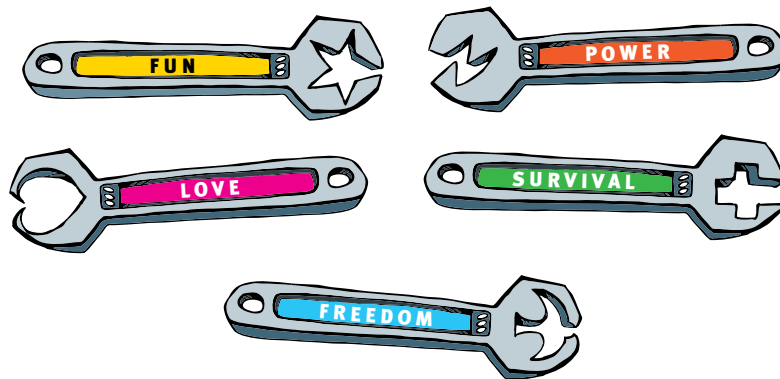
47

### Absolutely Ivan

Research noted in an article in The Atlantic suggested that there are four key beliefs that, when adopted by students, help them to persist with their learning. These beliefs are:

- That the student believes that they belong (Love and belonging need)
- That the student believes that their ability and skill grow with effort (Power need)
- That the student believes that they can be successful. (Power need)

That the student believes that their work has value for them. (Power, Fun and Freedom needs)



**Ivan:** So how do you help students embrace these key beliefs?

48

### Know your students

Students are more likely to believe that they belong when their teacher knows and remembers things about them (such as what their interests are). Giving students responsibility for classroom duties or routines can also increase their sense of belonging. It's important to make sure they know why they are doing it, or they may mistake what they are being asked to do as a punishment!

49

### Acknowledge positive behaviours

It will help students to believe that they are improving their skills when their efforts are noticed throughout the day. Teachers can do this by trying to notice positive behaviours and then pointing them out. For example, teachers can say things like *'It must feel great to have improved so much; 'I noticed how hard you have worked to create such a great assignment.'*

50

### Match levels of ability

Students will feel more successful when they are given work that matches their level of ability. Being given immediate feedback will also help. For example, rather than using a vague statement such as, *"Try again,"* if they get an answer wrong, say something like, *"You added these two numbers, but you should have added these two instead."* It is also helpful to allow them to use their strengths (we all have them). For example, you could let them mentor younger students in their area of strength.

### 51 Value add

To help students believe the work that they are asked to do has value to them it is important to relate their lessons to real life. Students who don't see the value can often seem unmotivated. They need to know *"Why do I have to know this?"* Teachers can help by showing students how classroom lessons can be applied to life outside the classroom. For example, when teaching shapes, we can ask students to point out shapes in the classroom. Or when teaching counting, show your students why being able to count is essential to buying things. In a unit on plant life, students could make a leaf collection.

**Ivan:** Linda, most teachers have what they politely refer to as 'disengaged students.' Any hints, and what does the research say?

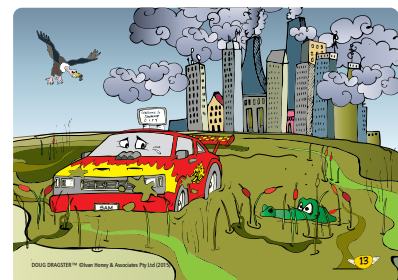
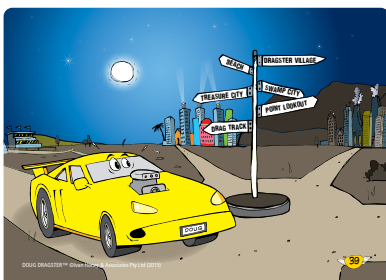
### 52 Find out what's going on

I've read a great article by Dr Kenneth Shore who notes that "If you're going to work well with persistently disengaged kids, you have to find something to like in each and every one of them." He advises that 'it's important to recognize and remember that no student would willingly choose to develop a behaviour pattern that brings punishment upon them'. He goes on to say that 'students who seem to be defiant are moulded and influenced by forces beyond the control of their young minds. They are using the most successful defensive behaviours they have developed so far to handle the stressful situations in which they find themselves'.

To help with this it is important to find out what is going on for the student. Teachers could try encouraging the student to talk to them, listen without making a comment and then summarise what the student has said back to them. This will help them to feel that they have been listened to (For example saying something like; 'it sounds like you feel scared at school')

When a student cannot or does not want to tell their teacher the reasons, teachers could try asking the students' parents or they could try listing reasons themselves while they are carefully observing the student's body language. For example, look for head nodding or active avoidance of your gaze after each suggestion and if they do those things, it will help identify the possible cause. When a reason can be identified, ask the student to suggest a solution to the problem.

**Ivan:** Again, the Get Happier School Project includes cards that can be used as a powerful visual prompt to help students to talk. Students are able to project their feelings onto the dragster cards which enables them to share safely. For example, place the picture cards in front of the student and ask, *'I wonder which of these dragster pictures are the closest to how you are feeling?'* Then ask, *'Can you tell me how the dragster is feeling?'* Then, *'When you feel like this, what are you telling yourself and doing?'* *'What is happening for you?'* Sometimes, you may elicit information that will need to be shared with the parents, your team or your principal. Importantly, it will help you understand some of the underlying issues so that you can address them directly to help the student.



**Ivan: Linda, most teachers can also have challenges with students who don't seem to be paying attention in class. What do you suggest?**

### 53 **Capture attention**

The website [Interventionalcentral](http://Interventionalcentral.com) has lots of suggestions to help with this:

One way is to make sure that you have captured a student's attention before giving them instructions or directions:

- When giving directions to the whole class try to use group alerting cues such as 'Eyes and ears on me!' to gain the class's attention (depending on their age).
- It's also important to wait until all the students are looking at you and are ready to listen before giving directions.
- Teachers should also privately approach any students who appear to need assistance, to see if they have understood after instructions have been given to the whole group. Then teachers should quietly restate the directions to the student and then have the student repeat the directions back the directions as a check for understanding.
- When giving directions to an individual student, call the student by name and establish eye contact before providing the directions.
- After giving the instruction, ask the student to repeat back or show what they need to do to make sure they have understood.

### 54 **Give clear direction and instruction**

Another way is to make sure that your directions are clear and that you have used language that all the students understand:

- Instructions are given at a pace that does not overwhelm any student.
- Try writing 'key words' on the white board as a reminder and/or teach students how to do this for themselves.
- Try to use concrete words when giving instructions (for example instead of saying 'can I have that book' instead try 'please pick up the book and give it to me' for those students who need it.)

### 55 **Give students choice**

It can also be important to allow students to make their own choices. Allowing students to exercise some degree of choice in their instructional activities helps to boost their attention span and increase their commitment to learning. (It also helps meet their need for Freedom!)

- Teachers could try making a list of 'choice' options that they are comfortable offering students during typical learning activities. For example, during independent seatwork, teachers might routinely let students choose where they sit, or allow them to work alone or in small groups, or even give them 2 or 3 different choices of assignment (with roughly equivalent difficulty and learning objectives).



56

**Give selective attention**

**Another tip is to just give attention when a student is on task.** Teachers who selectively give students attention only when that student is on-task are likely to find that those students show improved attention in class as a result. If you have a student who is often off-task, try to notice when they are on task and immediately let them know that you have noticed. You might say something like, 'It's great to see you having a go', or 'I see you are well on the way.'

**Attention breaks** (some call these brain breaks) can also help students who find it challenging to stay focused on their own work for long periods. Give them short breaks after they have worked for a while or once they have completed a certain amount of work (get them to something physical like hand out instructions or go for a walk). They could also be given some free time to do something for their efforts. For example, a student may be allowed to look at a favourite comic book for 2 minutes each time that they have completed five problems on a math worksheet and checked their answers. Attention breaks can refresh the student and make the learning task more reinforcing.

57

**Schedule demanding work**

Scheduling more demanding work in the mornings can also help. Many students with limited attention can focus better in the morning when they are fresh. Save easier subjects or tasks for later in the day when the student's attention may start to wane.

58

**Break up 'listening' time**

Teachers could also pick activities that need the student to do something other than just listen for long periods. When students are enthusiastically engaged in an activity, they are more likely to pay attention. Try to encourage students to 'show what they know' through some active response. For example, you might first demonstrate a learning strategy to students and then divide the class into pairs and have students demonstrate the strategy to each other while you observe and evaluate.

59

**Inner reminders**

Teaching students how to use "self-talk" in situations where attention is vital is also useful. These inner reminders might include statements such as:

- "Sit up straight, eyes on the speaker,"
- "I need to keep looking at the person speaking,"
- "I need to write this down."
- "Did I get everything this person said?"

There are also great affirmations in the '**Open Road Thoughts to Get Happier**' card set.

**Ivan: What about those times when students don't participate in class discussions?**

60

**Having a good class culture is important**

Many students can be afraid to speak up because they are afraid of what others might think or say about them. Help your students to see that your classroom is a safe space for them to take chances and be supported as they work toward mastering all their academic goals.

- Notice and encourage students when they have a go at answering or contributing to discussions.
- When a student does make a mistake, explain how important it is that the class got to hear the mistake and learn from it, rather than just telling the student they were wrong.
- If you hear students saying negative things about someone in the class because of an answer they gave or the way they read something aloud, don't let it go unaddressed.
- Of course, always keep on the **Open Roads** to foster safety and good relationships.

61

### **Try different approaches**

Also, it's important to remember that you may have students that are anxious or shy about speaking up in class. It's important to allow different ways to take part so that these students feel included.

- Try things like allowing nonverbal responses to questions (For example, having students put up their hand or nod their head to answer).
- Allow students to share their answer with a partner instead of the whole group.
- Tell the student in advance that you are going to call on them to answer a question. Let them know if they have the correct answer before they share it aloud, which will give them the confidence to take part.

**Ivan: Thank you, Linda for sharing such a great list of ideas. *Do you have one final hint that you know will make a real difference?***

62

### **"Don't Use The word 'Don't'!**

Did you know that when you are told 'NOT to picture something', you can't actually help doing what you are told NOT to? For example, if I tell you NOT to think of a Pink Elephant, you will automatically think of a Pink Elephant! In the same way, when students are just reminded of their 'negative' behaviour, that is what they will focus on.

So, change your language when explaining the behaviour you want –

- 'Don't rush' becomes 'Enjoy walking to your next class.'
- 'Don't walk on the new grass' becomes 'Make sure you walk on the concrete!'

**Ivan: Remember that the regular repetition of a positive message will ensure retention of those words. That is why we are so careful to express our affirmations in positive and empowering language. It finally becomes part of the way we think and make decisions. For this reason, you will find a lot of affirmations in the Get Happier School Project.**

## STUDY GUIDE

### Questions and Activities for Discussion and Practice

#### Chapter 9: 62 Simple Tips from the Experts

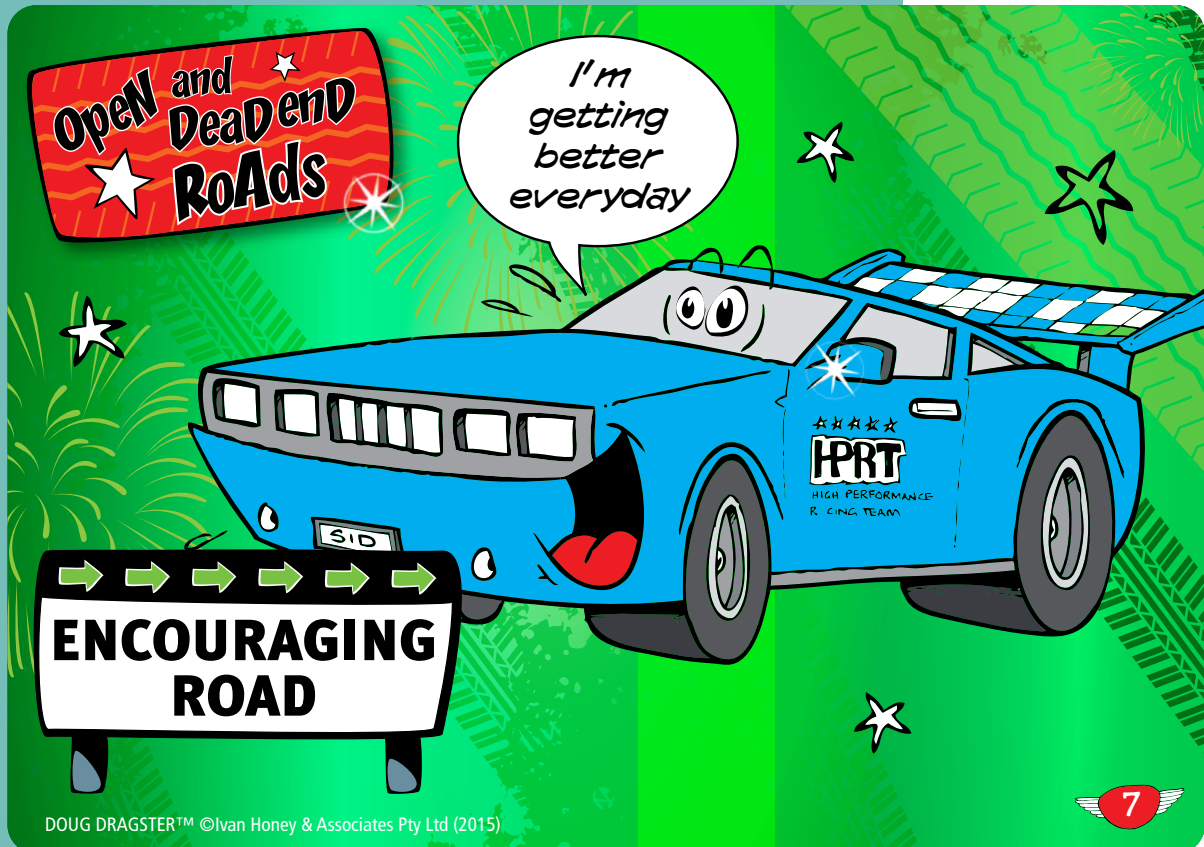
This part is self-explanatory.

Join in this conversation and discover some easy hints, strategies and ideas that could transform your management in the classroom.

#### Questions and Activities:

1. After reading this section, in small groups, talk about which strategies/ideas that you found most helpful or most challenging!
2. Share how by using one of these tips, you have been able to fine tune your management technique.
3. In your group, make a list of your own ideas and tips and share them with your colleagues.

# APPENDIX 1 AND 2



***It takes strength to be warm, firm, humorous and caring, and still do what we know we ought to do...***

***To achieve and maintain the relationships we need, we must stop choosing to reward and punish, and replace these destructive behaviours by choosing to encourage and negotiate.***

William Glasser M.D.,  
Choice Theory: A New Psychology of Personal Freedom

## APPENDIX 1:

# USING PRAISE AND EXTERNAL REWARDS

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Most schools have recognised the many shortcomings of a punishment-based behaviour management approach. It rarely helps and creates a hostile environment without genuine co-operation. Students behave only to avoid being hurt.

As Dr William Glasser noted, *"Fear is the enemy of quality"*. It creates a toxic environment where students are either frightened or learn to resist authority and learning opportunities. Punishment does not make happy, well-adjusted students. Many schools have turned to systems based on praise and rewards to combat this essentially negative and harmful approach. Surprisingly, students can also see this as a type of punishment! (Read *Punished by Rewards*: Alfie Kohn, for more details on this). Rewards and praise are also a form of external control. Essentially, by doing this, we are saying: *"To experience success and fulfilment in life, do not self-evaluate but rely on the opinions or praise of others to create your life."*

So many people who experience mental ill health have learned to become 'people pleasers', relying on external authority figures for approval. As a result, they never get in touch with their unique qualities, dreams or beliefs. Having become passive individuals, they live their lives for other influential authority figures who frequently abuse that power.

External forms of control and management still continue to be popular, often because they appear to have immediate outcomes. Rewards and punishments may result in fairly rapid compliance when you are in a position of power over a small student. However as we know, rewards and punishments need to keep escalating in order to have the same capacity to control. As many students get older, they soon learn that the people and situations they either feared or sought to please, actually have no power or influence over them. The results are clearly a disaster. As I walk in to many classrooms in secondary schools, at least half of the students are disconnected from school and from learning. Attempts to motivate students with threats, consequences or awards fall on deaf ears. Students no longer work to make their teachers happy, because they have not been able to discover the joy in learning that comes from discovering their talents, thus becoming self-motivated and self-disciplined. The students who conform and succeed at the 'game' have the capacity to enjoy the buzz of succeeding, either for their own satisfaction, or in many cases, to please their families or teachers.

An education system which focuses on short-term achievement scores, and uses external control measures to frighten students and their teachers to work harder, will not produce quality outcomes either educationally or socially.

Praise and rewards increase dependence upon others or power and deny individuals the opportunity to empower themselves. We can become aware of this when a student asks, *"What do you think of my drawing?"* expecting praise or commendation. We can turn this around by asking questions that give the power back to the student, such as:

- *Tell me more!*
- *Tell me about that part.*
- *What part do you like best?*
- *What have you learned by doing this?*
- *Why did you do this drawing?*
- *Would you do anything differently if you did it again?*
- *How do you feel about the drawing?*

### Problems with praise and rewards:

- The focus is on someone else's opinion, which prompts conformity or resistance.
- Praise depends on the opinion of another person to feel good about oneself.
- Rewarding students for doing tasks well often leads students to think that they should judge themselves by how close they get to perfection.
- 'Pumping' the student up increases their competitiveness and encourages them to believe they are only worthwhile when they are on top.
- Rewards need to escalate to have the same impact.
- Rewards change the way we engage with a task. To get a reward we do exactly what is required and no more.
- Rewards discourage creative or original thinking, taking risks, or exploring new possibilities by attacking a task differently.
- In conclusion, rewards and praise are a form of bribery. They are about manipulation and control, and they are not about ensuring quality teaching and building skills needed for the self-management of behaviour.

### You may wonder, "what can I say to a student that will NOT cause this damage?"

The answer is **ENCOURAGEMENT** (and it's an **OPEN ROAD** too!) Here we focus on those aspects of functioning within the student's control. Our communication encourages students to self-evaluate, enabling them to develop this skill and make effective decisions. They will then be able to cope when no one can advise or make decisions for them (which will frequently happen!). We are empowered and encouraged when we focus on our efforts to achieve our goals. This approach is always within our control and promotes resilience and positive self-talk, even when we cannot guarantee success.

Encouragement is about bringing attention to **improvement** by recognising that **effort** has improved performance. When we notice how students manage their lives consistently, they develop what Don Dinkmeyer in "Systematic Training for Effective Parenting" calls 'The courage to be imperfect'. It's not about achieving a perfect outcome but about a willingness to try and persist in facing challenges. This is the key life skill in resilience. It encourages students to recognise and be responsible for their behaviour.

I don't think a little praise now and again is harmful, but if we rely on praise to control, there are real concerns that it can lead to dependency and loss of personal power. Encouragement is the magic pill that creates inner strength, positive mindsets and the ability to persist in facing challenges.

Unfortunately, although not intended, punitive approaches can also creep into management systems.

Suppose our curriculum is not meeting the needs of all students. Is this a form of punishment against students who are already disadvantaged and not ready for the learning they are required to do?

- Do we inadvertently block opportunities for some students based on their label (i.e. attention deficit hyperactivity disorder etc.)?
- Are class marking processes an expression of an attempt to control through reward? For example, if you receive an 'A', you get 'free time'?

Punishment frequently results in resistance, revenge, stubbornness, oppositional defiant behaviour or irresponsibility. It tells students what they should have done but does not provide guidance, support and understanding of how to do better. Some students already feel out of control, coming



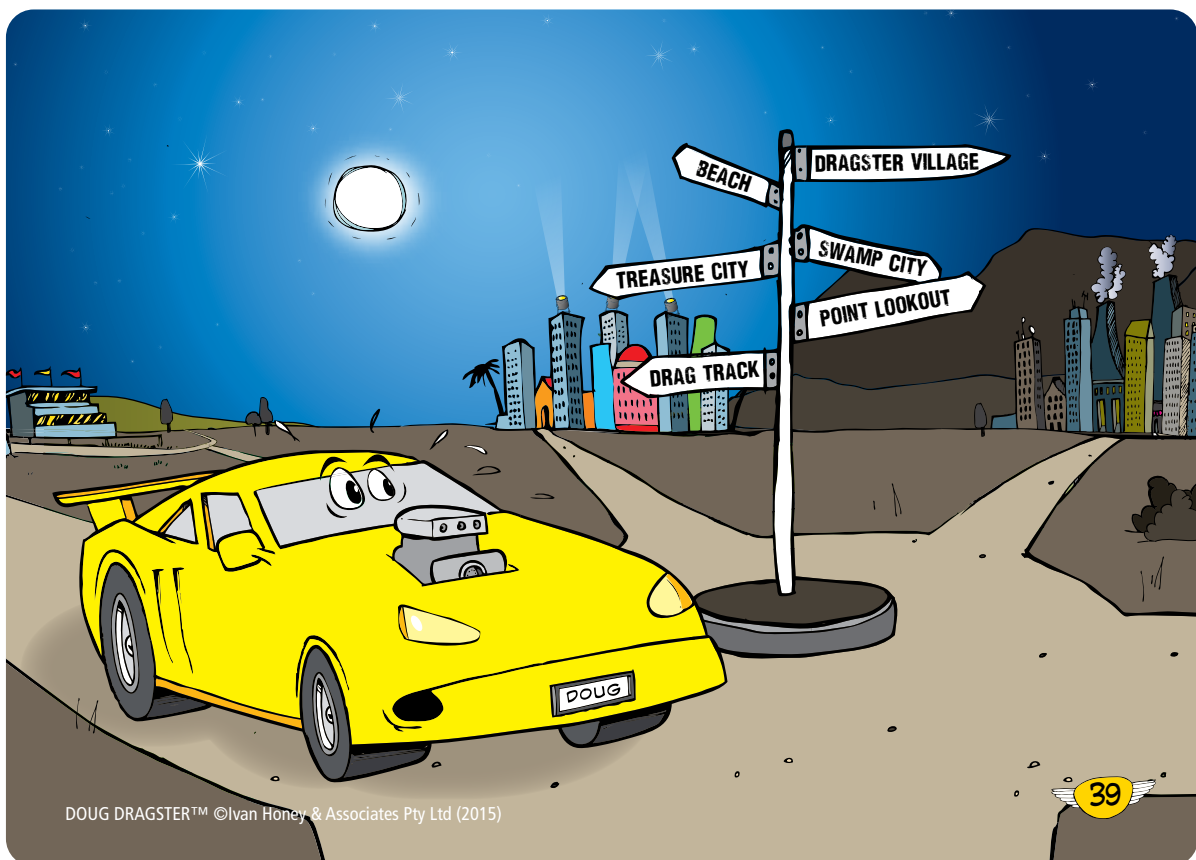
from homes where abuse, trauma and pain are commonplace. Punishment will reinforce their worst fears about the world and make them more a victim.

Reward and punishment behaviours largely condition people to accept the control of others as a norm, and as a result, this can lead them to become vulnerable to abuse. I have often heard abuse victims say to me, *'I didn't say anything because I didn't want to upset anyone!'*

When we see the source of our behaviour as outside ourselves, we are likely to avoid responsibility for our behaviour, blame others, and respond as passive victims. Alternatively, the response can be to resist, avoid learning, respond with aggression or live our lives as an angry person.

Teaching students from a young age to learn self-control, independence, and responsibility is a strong protective factor against abuse. When they understand their feelings, take responsibility for their feelings, and trust their feelings, it empowers them to stand up against bullies and predators.

Reward and punishment do not empower them to do this!



# SO WHAT ARE THE KEY DIFFERENCES BETWEEN PRAISE AND ENCOURAGEMENT?

**Praise** focuses building self-worth based on compliance and conformity; **Encouragement** focuses on building the student's ability to manage their lives constructively.

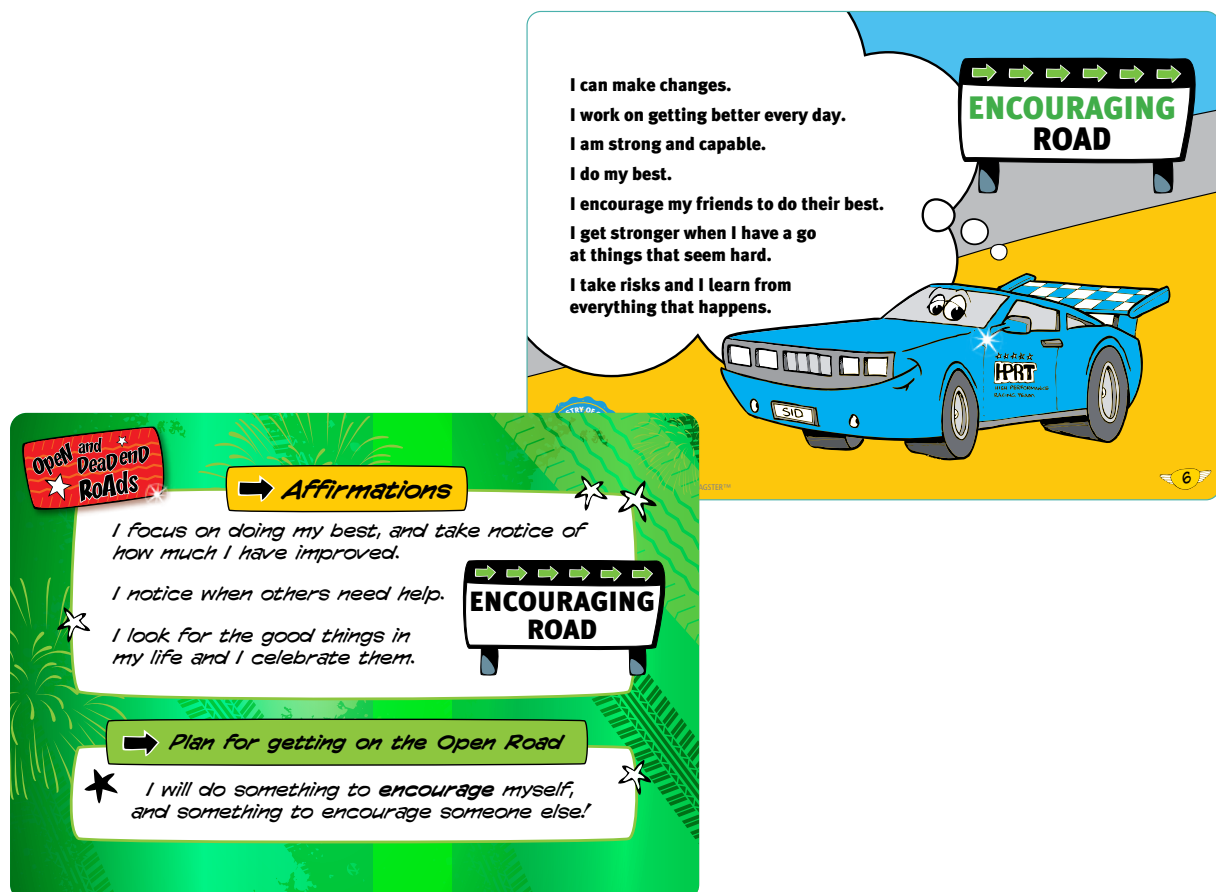
**Praise** focuses on pleasing others and deferring to the evaluation of powerful people; **Encouragement** focuses on teaching the student to evaluate their own progress and make their own decisions.

**Praise** is a reward for tasks that achieve success or perfection according to the evaluation of arbitrary authority; **Encouragement** focuses on the student's effort and improvement, thus focusing on what the student can realistically control, and strengthening their ability to persist at tasks.

**Praise** increases competitiveness and the sense of being worthwhile only when 'on top'; **Encouragement** focuses on how the student's contribution benefits themselves and others.

**Praise** instils the self-talk language of being 'better than' others, thus increasing stress and resulting in unrealistic and harmful expectations; **Encouraging** language creates self-talk that is encouraging, positive and realistic, and builds resilience and the capacity to keep on task.

**Praise** conditions students to be dependent on the opinions of others, and denies personal autonomy; **Encouragement** fosters the skills of self-evaluation and independent thinking.



## APPENDIX 2:

# THE IMPORTANCE OF LOGICAL CONSEQUENCES

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Logical consequences are a helpful and natural learning experience for all. Here we emphasise the reality of the social order, 'We ride safely on the left-hand side of the road to avoid hurting others or ourselves'. When we see the purpose of road rules, it becomes a logical choice. It reminds us that respect for ourselves and others increases our happiness (and safety). Consequences should never be arbitrary. They need to relate logically to the preceding action. Learning this engages our brain's executive centre and ability to think clearly and act wisely. There is no moral judgement in logical thinking. As people say, 'It is what it is' and 'You can't argue against facts'. The logic of natural consequences continues.

You cannot change the past. There is no shame in mistakes...we all make them...and do the best with what we know at the time. **But what could we do differently next time if the behaviour didn't increase our happiness and wellbeing?** We need to be more concerned about future behaviour than what has happened in the past. Using consequences this way requires us to maintain a positive, supportive stance that values the student regardless of their suboptimal choice. It also confronts the student with a clear choice: choose unhappiness or find another way to get what they want. This approach helps them as they learn to become responsible decision-makers and respectful people rather than victims of their past.

Everything we do has a consequence. For example: yesterday I nearly tripped over! I realised that this was a result of me rushing to get to an appointment. Looking further into the situation, it was the result of some disorganisation on my part. Looking even further into the situation, I become aware that my habitual rushing behaviour was placing both my physical and emotional well-being at risk. So, as I become aware of the consequences of my behaviour, I can choose to adjust it to improve my safety and well-being.

Logical consequences are an important guide for living a good life!

Finally, many people are confused about the difference between a logical consequence and a punishment.

The work of **Don Dinkmeyer** and **Gary McKay** in their excellent book, ***Systematic Training for Effective Teaching***, make the differences clear.

This is a simple summary of their description.

**Punishment** emphasizes the power of personal authority.

**Logical consequences** emphasise the reality of the social order.

**Punishment** is rarely related to the act and is often arbitrary.

**Logical consequences** are logically related to the misbehaviour and make sense.

**Punishment** implies moral judgements of the student.

**Logical consequences** have no moral judgement and treat the student with dignity.

**Punishment** emphasises past behaviour and what the student has done wrong.

**Logical consequences** are more concerned with the present and future behaviour.

**Punishment** emphasises the power of the teacher over the student and threatens disrespect.

**Logical consequences** are presented respectfully and kindly.

**Punishment** is all about personal power and retribution.  
**Logical consequences** are based on logic and fairness.

**Punishment** demands compliance.  
**Logical consequences** present a choice.

## STUDY GUIDE

### Questions and Activities for Discussion and Practice

#### Chapter 10:

In this section, explore the small differences that make a huge difference.

How do you know that your communication is **praise and reward based**, or whether it is empowering the students through **focused encouragement**?

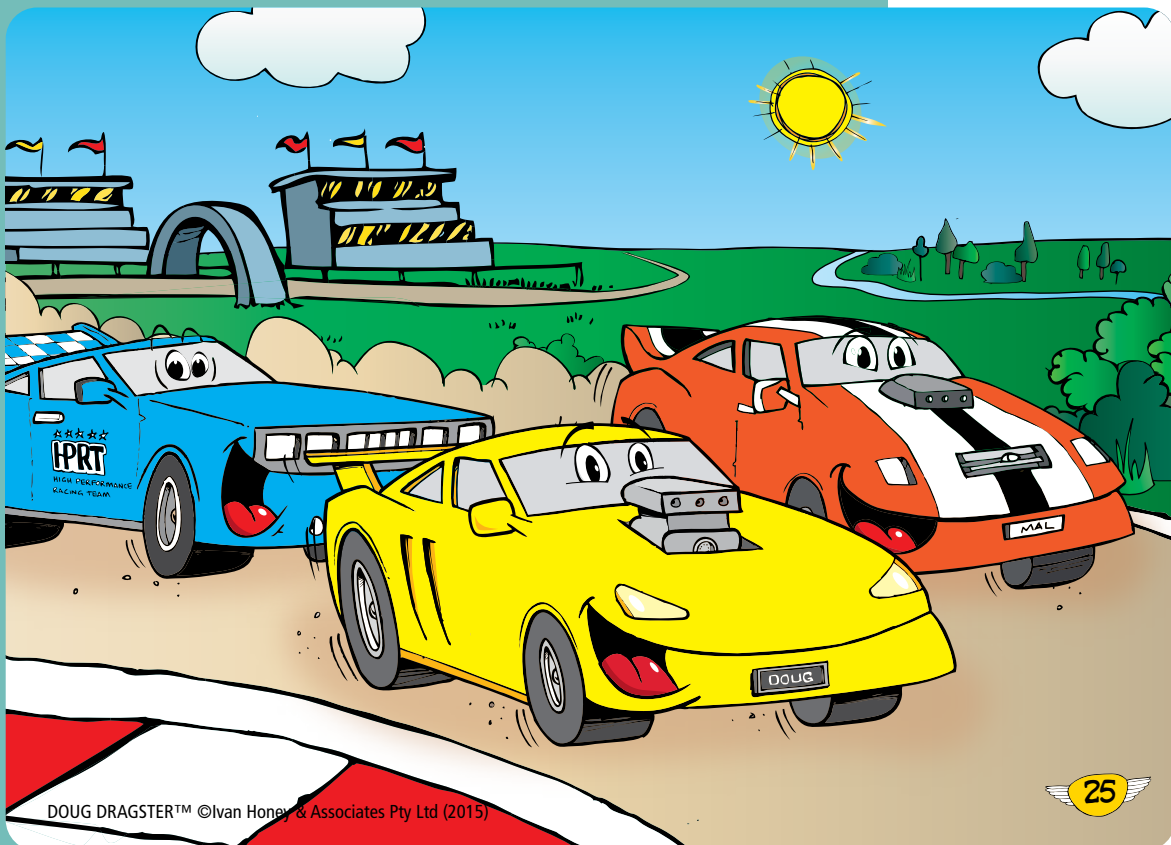
How do we know that the application of **logical consequences** is helping the student to learn, and is not perceived as **punishment**?

When we understand this, we can be confident that what we are doing is not only helping the students learn from the situation but setting the student up to become confident and self-regulating.

#### Questions and Activities:

1. Share some 'light bulb' moments as you reflected on this section.
2. You may consider adjusting some of your well-being practices to align with what you have learnt. Check on Chapter 7, 'A Real School Example'
3. Develop plans to support all staff members' mental health.
4. To have the most impact school wide, consider how all staff are best supported to deliver a self-managing program across the school: teachers, students, parents and the community.
5. Finally, if you want to dig deeper into any of these topics, select some of the books in the Reference section to read. Management is such a key part of our teaching role, and to keep evolving our practice will ensure that our chances of success and happiness are enhanced.

# THANK YOU LEADERS, MANAGERS, AND TEACHERS!



***It is almost impossible for anyone, even the most ineffective among us, to continue to choose misery after becoming aware that it is a choice.***

William Glasser M.D

# THANK YOU LEADERS, MANAGERS, AND TEACHERS!

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Having taught and been involved with schools all my life, I have great respect and appreciation for the challenging and empowering work done every day by teachers. Dr Glasser refers to teaching as one of the hardest jobs in the world because students come to work at school but are not paid for what they do!

I can understand why teachers sometimes use rewards to get compliance and engagement. However, as we have explored this topic, we understand that external control methods have some harmful effects. It is not working for a significant part of the student population, particularly when they reach adolescence.

Learning in school should not be seen as a competition, a competitive race to the top creating winners and losers. Every student is Neurodiverse and has a unique development rate, strengths, learning style and interests.

The self-managing classroom is where all students are intrinsically motivated to do their best to complete meaningful work and co-operate with the teacher and their peers. I know that this is what most teachers strive to achieve.

The education system will keep changing, but its success is always due to you, the creative teacher who intentionally teaches self-management, empowering students to become their best selves. We will feel discouraged at times, but when we remind ourselves that we have other choices, we are able to break free from negativity and use our creativity to overcome our challenges.

Nelson Mandela, the inspiring leader, knew all about self-management and learning. He demonstrated what could be done even in the face of extreme hostility and resistance. If possible, watch the movie 'Invictus' which tells the story of his coming to power in South Africa. One of his famous quotes is: *"Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world."*

You will be able to implement many of the strategies and enjoy your classroom and students more than ever.

I have just finished sharing some of these well-being and mental health ideas in a large Secondary College. At the end of the day, one of the coordinators shared her reflections with her colleagues. Her wishes for her staff are my wishes for you. 😊

This is how it went:

*Every day is a day to reflect, collaborate and give ourselves a mental health tune up.*

*At times, our Fuel is running low*

*Windscreens are dirty,*

*Wheels may be wobbly,*

*Our navigation system broken down,*

*And our engine running rough,*

*I wish you well as you jump into the driver's seat,*

*grab your steering wheel and*

*head towards the open roads!*



## ENDORSEMENT OF THE GET HAPPIER SCHOOL PROGRAM

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Moama Anglican Grammar School is a **Get Happier School** and has been so since 2017. As part of our Pastoral Care approach, we use this integrated, sequential and wholistic Primary School program to increase independence and responsibility in our students. It is aligned to the Australian curriculum and meets the standards of the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL)

Teachers guide and support our students with a trauma informed, research based, positive psychology approach, helping them on their journey to develop their own social and emotional wellbeing.

It teaches an internal control psychology, which gives students and staff the tools to regulate their own emotions, make positive choices, and forge strong relationships.

The title **The Get Happier Project** does not convey an unrealistic expectation of constant happiness, but teaches the skills, mindsets, and confidence to get the best out of life in any situation. **The Get Happier Project** runs alongside the many other elements of our Pastoral Care program and provides students with the opportunity to develop their own emotional intelligence. The students enjoy the stories, discussion, games, and activities, and especially in using what they have learned to help others.

For students, the program has made a real difference to their wellbeing and confidence, as our evaluation measures indicate.

For teachers, the program has given them a framework to understand and manage behaviour, as well as teach the skills for relationships, wellbeing, and mental health.

For the school, it has helped create a visual and positive wellbeing culture which supports mental health and resilience, using a simple common language.

For parents, the program provides support with parenting skills and enhances congruence with school values. Many parents are attracted to the school because of this program.

For the broader community, the program reaches out to support other community members.

As a classroom teacher and founding co-ordinator of the program, it has provided me with confidence and support in all aspects of my role as an educator. This includes communicating effectively with parents, to how I interact with students and their needs. It truly underpins all I do in the classroom and beyond.

Based on my experience, I believe that any school would benefit from adopting this SEL program.

Callum Gibbs  
Year 6 Teacher  
Moama Anglican Grammar School  
March 2023

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You can attend amazing and empowering training by faculty of the William Glasser Institute in over 60 countries around the world.

OR you can check out training at the Get Happier School, [www.gethappier.net](http://www.gethappier.net)

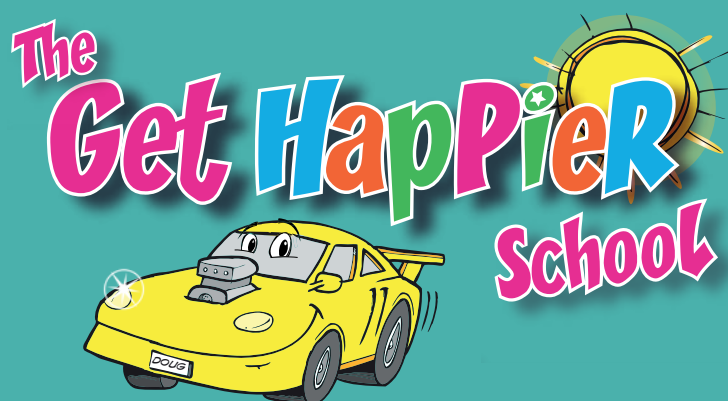


This book will provide guidelines and resources to create genuine, respectful authentic relationships free of manipulation and coercion.

If you want this in your classroom, this book is for you.

It's an approach to learning:

- social skills that build metacognition, the essential thinking tool to help students step away from thoughts and actions that create misery.
- that is free of external coercion and where students become aware, independent and responsible for their learning and behaviour.
- where you can enjoy the process of teaching and learning, give up old quick-fix controlling habits, and be yourself.
- where you can walk into the classroom daily inspired, flexible and in control of your actions and thoughts.
- where you can help students work to their potential and develop the skills and resilience for a mentally healthy and productive life.



Ivan Honey is the founder of the Get Happier School program, and a two times Amazon best-selling author.

He has been a psychologist for over 45 years, and worked extensively with schools, students and families.

Ivan has been closely involved in setting up and providing support in diverse areas such as programs for recovery from student sexual abuse, the abolition of Corporal punishment in schools, and Disability inclusion policies and programs.

He is a member of the Australian Psychological Society and is Senior Faculty in the William Glasser Institute, working in Australia and countries around the world as an instructor.

As a past member of the Australian Institute of Management, he has lectured widely and worked in many organisations.

Find out more about Ivan and the Get Happier School Project at [www.gethappier.net](http://www.gethappier.net).