

PDF

Teen HERO Trainings

Headspace - Emotions - Relationships - Objectives



sidekicktohero.com

Get the Videos!



There are super awesome, short, comedic videos that go along with the Teen Training Handbook.

And you can get access to all of them for just \$7!

Scan the QR code below or go to www.sidekicktohero.com/handbook to get access to it today!



Teen HERO Training

Headspace - Emotions - Relationships - Objectives



CONFIDENCE

COURSE



sidekicktohero.com

Welcome to this Teen Hero Training on Confidence.

I am Joey Mascio, a confidence and success coach for teens!

Have you ever seen someone who was just **born with confidence**?

They walk around just so outgoing and smooth-talking, nothing holds them back, **they just are who they are**, everyone else be-darned.

Don't you just hate those people??

Well, I've got great news for you.

The great news is **NOT** that I'm going to help you turn into one of them. I can't. Because the great news is that **THEY DON'T EXIST!** They're not real.

But Joey, I know they exist, I see them at my school all the time!

No you don't.

What you see is a teen just like yourself, who yes, is doing *something* confidently. But **they were not BORN with confidence**, nor are they just an inherently good at everything.

Those are **lies** that hold us back.

And I'm going to tell you why in this Teen Hero Training on Confidence.



What's a "Hero Training?"

I call this a Hero Training because I believe everyone was born to be **the hero of their story**.

Simply put, a **hero** is a character in a story who has **the power to change** the outcome.

A **sidekick** however is a character in a story who **CANNOT** change the outcome. They don't have the power.

Even though you and I were born to be the hero of our stories, **we don't always feel like it**, do we?

Sometimes we feel like a sidekick. Someone who wants to do or be more but can't. **We can't change our outcome.**

For 5 years, I have worked with teens on going from sidekick to hero. To do that, a teen just needs to beef up their skills in four areas that I call **the HERO Arenas**.

Headspace ← *This is the Starter Pack for Headspace*
Emotions
Relationships
Objectives

You get all four of those down, you can go from sidekick to hero **any day of the week!**

This hero training is from the Headspace Arena and I call it **the Confidence Crash Course**. Let's get into it!

sidekicktohero.com



If you want to be more confident the first thing you gotta realize is this: **you don't want confidence.**

Most teens I work with, when they say they want to be more confident, what they mean is **they want to be able to do things** that they can't do yet.

Because, **confidence is the ability to be successful at things.**



For example, I am confident I can do a kickflip on a skateboard. **I've done it a hundred times.**

My nephew just asked me last week to do one for his friend, it took me a couple of tries, **but I landed it.** I also landed a heel flip (brag).

I'm confident on a skateboard! I have lots of experience and lots of success in landing kickflips.

But, **that confidence only applies to tricks I know** how to do. It doesn't even apply to all of skateboarding because I am NOT confident I could land a Fakie 360 Flip. I've never done it before.

That confidence also **doesn't transfer to other things** like public speaking, starting conversations, driving, flying a kite, cooking Eggs Benedict, cliff jumping, or anything else!

Confidence is non-transferable. Because it only applies to things you can already do successfully and therefore it is useless!

Also, therefore, it is not something you can be born with.

Nobody is born being able to do things successfully. When we're born we can't even walk, talk, or wipe our own butts.

I'm not here to turn you into someone who is just confident all the time, **for two reasons.**

First Reason

I can't because that means I would have to **magically** make you able to do *everything* successfully.

Like public speaking, starting conversations, driving, flying a kite, cooking Eggs Benedict, cliff jumping, and everything else!!

Since I broke my magic wand last week, **that's out of the question.**

Second Reason

I want you to get good at something else. Something even better and more useful than confidence.

I want you to get good at **SELF-confidence.**

There is a big difference! And this is a major mindset shift for many teens **(and adults).**

We look at other people who are really good at things, the star football player, the lead in the musical, the pretty popular girl, and we say, "Man, I wish I was as **confident** as they are!"

But what we really mean is "Man, I wish I could play football **better**, sing **better**, or look **better**."



Think about it, nobody looks at the plucky scrawny kid who sucks at throwing a football—but dagnabbit, never gives up—**no one looks at him** and says "I wish I was as confident as he is!"

BUT THEY TOTALLY SHOULD!!

Confidence is the ability to be successful.

Self-Confidence is the ability to FAIL successfully.

Failing successfully is FAR more valuable than being successful. Because if you can fail successfully, you can eventually become successful at **anything you want**.

Self-confidence is transferable because you are putting your confidence not in things you can do, but in your worth as a person.

So, what does failing successfully even mean, Joey??

Well, there are two words I need to define here. **First, fail.**

Personally, **I don't believe failure is a real thing**, not as most people view it. I think it's a word we made up to make talking about it easier.

Here's my drama-free definition of failure:

Failure is when my expectations and reality don't match.



I thought I was going to **get the job**, and I didn't.

I thought she was going to say yes when **I asked her out**, and she didn't.

I thought I was going to **win the tennis match**, and I didn't.

Realize that if I expected to not get the first 4 or 5 jobs I applied for, **I wouldn't view it as failing** when I didn't get them.

And if I truly recognized that dating is just the process of asking people out until I find someone who is just as interested in me as I am in them, **I wouldn't view it as failing** when someone says no to a date.

And if I knew that even the great tennis players lost matches on their way to greatness, then **I wouldn't view it as failing**.

When we don't view things as failing, **it makes it easier to keep trying**, and therefore makes it easier to get better at them until we can do them successfully, and then, we **become confident** in that thing.

But this doesn't mean failing doesn't hurt, **failing can totally still hurt**.

Dealing with those emotions is important, which is what I teach in the Emotions Arena. You can always get access to all my tools by signing up for a two week free trial to my Sidekick to Hero gamified app for teens at sidekicktohero.com.

So, the first definition is this: failing is just when expectations and reality don't match.

The second thing I need to define is **failing successfully**.

Failing successfully is **not taking it personally** when expectations and reality don't match.

Because we take it personally, don't we?

I don't get the job = I'm useless!

The person I asked out says no = I did it wrong and no one will ever want to date me!

I lose the match = I'll never be a star tennis player!

We allow it to tank our self-confidence. We literally devalue our self and who we are.



Failures of Being Different

We also take personally other types of “failures,” I call them **Failures of Being Different**.

These are things we don’t commonly think of as “failing” but our brain is totally putting them in the same category.

Like how we **look**, how much **money** our family has, a **diagnosis** we may have, a **personality** trait or quirk we were born with.

We look at ourselves and think, *“Man, I didn’t expect to be different from everyone else in this way, but I am and **it sucks to be me.**”*

We take our differences personally and that tanks our self-confidence. **But it doesn’t have to suck to be you.** It doesn’t have to suck to fail or to be different.

SO HOW DO WE BECOME SELF-CONFIDENT?

If you want to become self-confident, you need to decide that being you is **AWESOME**, just as you are, **flaws and all**.

I’ve heard some people call this being **FLAWSOME**

I’m awesome even with my flaws and failures!

I dig that, love that term. I wish I made it up. However, here is a term I did make up, and it’s the opposite of being Flawsome.

It’s being **FLAWFUL**

It’s when **we think our flaws make being ourselves awful. Less than. The worst.**

Flawsome or flawed, both are a choice. I don’t care how many times you’ve failed or how different you are, **being flawsome is always an option for you!**

In order to be flawsome, you need to love **EVERYTHING** that you are just the way you are.

That doesn't mean you can't improve some areas you want to improve, but **before you can improve you need to accept yourself.**

That's how you create self-confidence.

Then once you have self-confidence, you can go about the journey of improvement and growth.

And, when you fail along the way, because everyone does, you can **stay the course because your strength and identity doesn't rely on being successful, it relies on you being you and loving it, flaws and all.**

Also, as a bonus, once you become truly self-confident, **you'll never be bullied again.**

People may still point out your flaws and differences in a mean way, but it won't be bullying to you because you won't believe their story that your "failures" make you lesser.

You'll know the truth. You will be great even with your failures and flaws.

You are not the sidekick in your story, **you are the hero.** You have the power to change your story and it starts with self-confidence.

Now get out there and live life in hero mode!



sidekicktohero.com

you
ARE
awESome



Teen HERO Training

Headspace - Emotions - Relationships - Objectives

AXING

ANXIETY

STARTER PACK



sidekicktohero.com

Welcome to this Teen Hero Training on Axing Anxiety.

I am Joey Mascio, a confidence and success coach for teens!

I want you to picture this... **Metropolis is burning.** The great city is just a mess. Thieves are robbing banks, orphanages are crumbling, bad guys are running amok.

Sitting on the corner of main street, in the middle of it all is **Superman** (or **SuperGirl** for the ladies), with head in hands looking glum. Sullen. Beaten.

Jimmy Olson, young photographer for the Daily Planet, runs up and says, "Superman/Supergirl, there you are! The city needs you! Lex Luthor has overthrown the Mayor, riots consume the streets, it's chaos out there!"

Superman or Supergirl just sighs and says, "**I can't.** There's too much. I'm not strong enough."

Jimmy Olsen looks dumbfounded. "What? Not strong enough?? **You're the strongest person on earth!** Fly around at super-speed and save everyone!!"

"It won't work," says the dejected hero. "I can't win. **I don't have it in me...**"

And together **they watch the world burn.**



Whoa, what a downer, right?

What are the options here? **How can the story end well?** How can everything change?

There's only one option, really. **Superman or Supergirl has to find it within themselves** to access the power they have to save the day and change the story.

What's not an option? **Jimmy Olsen saving the day.** He can't. He's not physically able to. Doesn't have the power to do it.

Metropolis is a metaphor for our life sometimes. Sometimes it's chaotic. Sometimes there is a lot of bad stuff going on that we don't like.

The question is, **who do you believe you are in the story?** Superman/Supergirl or Jimmy Olsen?

I know who you are, but do you know?

You are the hero of your story. You are not the sidekick.

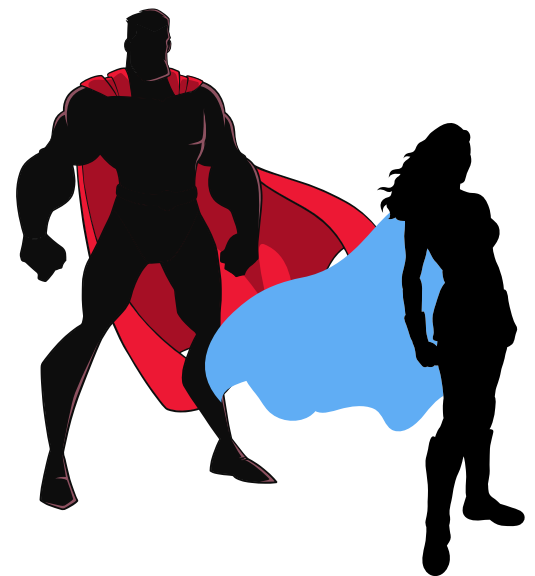
Sidekicks do not have the power to change their story. **Heroes always do.**

You and I were born to be the hero of our stories, but we don't always feel that way, do we?

Sometimes we feel like the sidekick.

But in those moments, we are not Jimmy Olsen. **We are Superman or Supergirl.** The hero who is experiencing some bad days or some dark nights.

But we always have it in us to change it. **Always.**



I help teens go from sidekick to hero. That's my thing.

I take teens from being someone who feels like they can't change their story to **someone who totally can.**

Teens become a hero by mastering the four Hero Arenas: Headspace, Emotions, Relationships, and Objectives.

Headspace

Emotions



*This is the
Starter Pack
for Emotions*

Relationships

Objectives

This Teen Hero Training Starter Pack covers emotions, specifically anxiety, stress, and overwhelm.

This is your Axing Anxiety Starter Pack!



I'll be sharing **three steps** you can take to minimize and manage those feelings. These things have worked for me, my wife, my kids, and a gripload of teens I've worked with over the years.

So let's go!

Step 1

Shift Our Response to Anxiety

The most common responses our brain goes to when we feel anxiety is to **avoid, resist, or react**.

Avoiding looks like not starting our homework because we are overwhelmed with school or withdrawing from social situations because we feel anxiety when talking to others.

Resisting looks like suppressing our emotions, forcing a smile and a laugh even though we are stressed, fighting the feeling because we don't want to feel it, because if we do, it means everything has gone wrong.

Reacting is taking any actions that we don't really want to take like yelling at someone or being snarky or rude, even though that's not who we want to be.

Those are our natural responses to anxiety, stress, and overwhelm. **But I don't want you to do any of those three things.**

I want you to do secret option number 4. **I want you to allow it.**

*“**Wait, wut?** Joey, I thought this whole thing was about axing anxiety. Killing it good!”*

It is, but this is one of those things in life that don't make any sense, **but works**. You see, **we magnify our unpleasant feelings** when we avoid, resist, or react to them. But, when we shift our response from avoid, resist, react to allow, we get a little more control over it. **We can feel a little bit better.**

So, step number 1 is to **shift from viewing anxiety** as something we need to eliminate to something we need to tame.

It's a subtle shift but **it will make all the difference** and help us do Step 2...

Step 2

Transform Your Anxiety

Step 2 is to transform your anxiety from a **beast** to a **blip**.

When we feel anxiety, stress, or overwhelm it seems huge, right? **Like monstrous sometimes!**

Once you've done step one, shift your response to allowing it, then **you can shrink it** to just a blip using BLIP.

Breathe
Locate
Imagine
Permit

Breathe

Any controlled breathing is fine, I like either box breathing or the physiological sigh.



Box Breathing

Breathe in through your nose for 4 seconds, **hold it** for 4 seconds, **breathe out** through your nose for 4 seconds, **hold it** for 4 seconds, repeat.



The Physiological Sigh

Two deep breaths in through your nose in a row, and then let out **one long breath through your mouth** with a slight hiss for as long as you can.

Locate

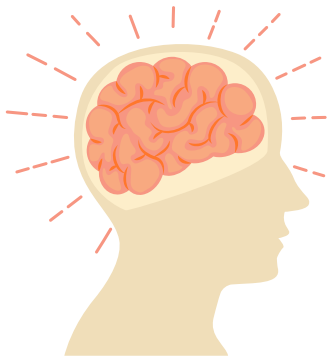
Our emotions show up somewhere in our body, so find where your stress and anxiety show up for you.

Your chest? Your stomach? Your head? Those are the common places but **it can really show up anywhere.**

Locating it helps you to better allow it to be there. It's hard to allow a friend to stay over if you don't know where they are in your house!



Imagine



This is the fun one. Our emotions are very abstract, so it's hard to manage them.

When we imagine what they look like, **it makes them more concrete** and, therefore, easier to manage.

When we imagine our anxiety, **it can look like anything we want it to.** You can give it a shape, color, and a texture (ex. red trapezoid that is rough or spiky).

You can imagine **what it's doing** like spinning, pulsing, sinking.

You can even imagine that it is a little **creature from your favorite anime show** or something. It can be anything from anywhere!

For example, **my anxiety is a black and blue lightning storm** that is swirling around in my chest.



Permit

The last part of BLIP is to permit it to be there. **Give anxiety permission to be a part of your life.**

After you've breathed, put your hand on where it is in your body, imagine what it looks like and say,

“Hello little black and blue lightning storm. I give you permission to be here.”

This acceptance signals to your mind that **everything is okay**. Just because you are feeling this way does not mean anything has gone wrong, that you are broken, or anything like that.

It's not some big **beast** of a problem. It's just a little **blip** in your life.

Step 3

Identify the Source

Your anxiety isn't coming from **nowhere**.

Now, for some people it may. I know there are genetics or other biological factors at play for some people. A doctor or therapist can best help people with that.

I'm talking about the kind of anxiety that every human feels. What I have found to be true for me is that my anxiety, stress, and overwhelm are **always coming from a thought**.

Some view I have of myself or others or the world is causing my anxiety, **whether I am aware of it or not**.

Sometimes **you straight up know what thought is causing your anxiety:**

- I am going to fail this test!
- I don't have enough time to get everything done!
- No one likes me at school!



Other times, **the thought may be subconscious** and you'll have to create one that fits the scenario:

- I don't know why I'm anxious, but I do have that game after school today and being worried that I'm going to perform badly seems to fit



This moves us into the **Headspace section of the HERO Arenas**, and there are other tools I have to help with this, but I can't go into them here.

You can always get access to **all my tools** by signing up for a **two week free trial to my Sidekick to Hero gamified app for teens** at sidekicktohero.com.

But for now, **identify the thought that is the source of your anxiety** and work on disbelieving it.

And you're probably believing that thought pretty hard so **it will take some work** to get your brain to let go of it, even loosen its grip just a little.

These three steps make up your Axing Anxiety starter pack:

1. **Shift your response**
2. **Transform your anxiety**
3. **Identify the source**

I want to challenge you to **use these three steps every time** you start feeling anxious, stressed, or overwhelmed

Using them will help you **chop anxiety down to size** and make it more manageable. Remember, this is your story and you are the hero.

Which means **you have the power within you to rise up and change your life!** You just gotta tap into it.

Now get out there and live life in hero mode!



Teen HERO Training

Headspace - Emotions - Relationships - Objectives



SMALL TALK

101



sidekicktohero.com

Welcome to this Teen Hero Training on Small Talk.

I am Joey Mascio, a confidence and success coach for teens!

Have you ever set out to **make new friends** and meet new people but find your conversations go a lot like this:

You: Hey.

Them: Hey.

You: (awkward silence)

Them: (stares at the floor)

You: Okay, bye!

Them: Bye.



Awkward, right?

If that's happened to you before, **you're not alone**. I coach teens on talking with other people all the time because it's the number one thing teens struggle with.

Adults struggle with it too, they just pretend that they don't.

My goal for this **Teen HERO Training** is to give you some tools to make starting conversations easy for you



What's a "Hero Training?"

I call this a HERO training because in any book, movie, or classic tale, a **Hero** is someone who **has the power to change their story**.

Sidekicks on the other hand, **don't have the power to change the story** they're in. That's not their role.



I believe you and I were **born to be the hero** of our own stories, but we don't always feel like it.

Sometimes we feel like the sidekick. Powerless to change some part of our lives and get the results that we want to get .

We feel like other people are the Hero, they have the power to get what they want, but not us. Like it's easier for other people to do things that's harder for us, **like talking to other people!**

Well, I've made it my job to teach teens how to go from **Sidekick to Hero** in their lives. To do that, a teen just needs to beef up their skills in four areas that I call the HERO Arenas: Headspace, Emotions, Relationships, Objectives.

You get all four of those down, you can go from sidekick to hero **any day of the week**.

This Teen Hero training is from the Relationships Arena and it's **my playbook for starting conversations**. Let's get into it!

Headspace
Emotions
Relationships
Objectives

This is a lesson
from Relationships

If you look at talking to other people as a sport, then **there are two types of “moves”** you can do to make starting conversations easier.

The Moves You Make in Your Head



Knowing What to Think

The Moves You Make with Your Mouth



Knowing What to Say

Everyone usually thinks that to make conversations easier, you mostly have to be good at the second type of move, knowing what to say.

Teens I work with always tell me that the reason they are bad at talking to others is– **“I never know what to say!”**

That would seem to make sense because talking with other people primarily involves, well, actually talking!

But, I’ll let you in on a secret I figured out a long long time ago, when I was a teen. Talking with other people is more a matter of **knowing what to think** then it is of knowing what to say.

In fact, I would say that knowing what to think is **three times more important** than knowing what to say!

I’ll prove it to you.

I’m going to teach you **three mindset moves** and **one conversation trick** that will help make starting conversations SOO MUCH easier.

I call it the **Conversation C.A.P.E!**



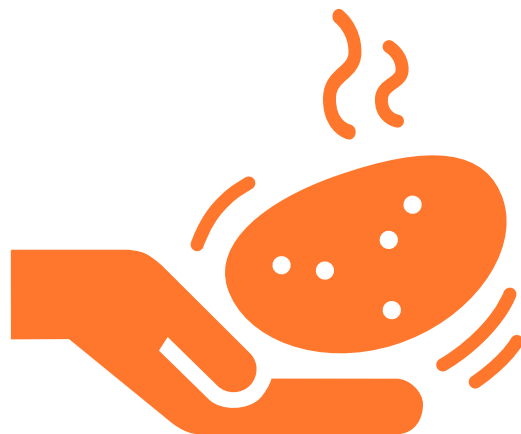
The conversation C.A.P.E

C - Carry the Conversation

The first mindset move you can do to make starting conversations easier is C - Carry the Conversation.

Choose to be the one who is going to carry the conversation, make it successful

Usually this is like a game of Hot Potato with teens trying to talk to each other. Which is where we get conversations like I showed on the first page.



So, avoid both of you waiting for the other person to lead it. **YOU lead it.**

You're the hero, you want to make new friends and meet new people, **so don't rely on others to make it easier for you,** to do all the heavy lifting. You choose to carry the conversation.

Now, if you sense that they want to carry the conversation and take the lead, awesome! Let them! But I want you to go in to every conversation deciding in your head that **it's on you to carry it.**

Got it?



A – Assume They Want to Talk to You

The next mindset move to make is A, assume that the other person wants to talk to you.

Starting a conversation with someone assuming that they would rather NOT talk with you is **a horrible way to start**. It's failing from the beginning.

But we do this, right? **We assume that they'd rather not be talking to us**, so we look for evidence to prove that true.



"Hey, how's it going? Oh, you looked at your watch. Sorry! You probably have to go, right? You probably have other things to do, cooler people to talk to. My bad. I'm so stupid!!!"

Okay, it probably doesn't go EXACTLY like that, but pretty close, right?

When we assume that the other person doesn't want to talk to us, it gunks up our brains, **makes it harder to say words**, to just be our awesome selves. And we are awesome!! Why wouldn't people want to talk to us??

So start every conversation assuming that the person actually **WANTS** to talk to you, that they at least want the conversation to go well.

Now, does that mean that everyone we talk to actually does want to talk with us? Of course not, I know **I'm not made for everyone** and everyone is not made for me. But that's something I can figure out during the conversation and make the decision to end it, no problem.

But don't START the conversation already assuming that you should be ending it. That will get you to start off on the **wrong foot every time**. Then, they probably won't want to talk to you, because you're acting like you think you're not someone worth talking to!

So, A is assume that the other person wants to talk to you.

P - Give them Permission to Think Whatever They Want About You

The third mindset move to make is P, give them PERMISSION to think whatever they want about you.

This is a tough one for a lot of people, **including myself**. After all, isn't the whole point of a conversation to get the other person to think good things about us?

I want them to think I'm funny. Smart. Kind. Clever! Whatever!!

Actually, it's not. I'm just going to remove that pressure from you.

When you are talking to someone else, it is **NOT your job** to get them to think what you want about you. Don't go in thinking:



"Okay, Becky needs to think that I'm cool, but not full of myself, just relaxed, loosey goosey, but kind of hilarious. Okay, here we go... BECKY HI!! (awk)"

You may not be doing that consciously, but chances are it's happening at a **subconscious level**. It's kinda baked into each of us to want other to think the best about us.

But, we're not in control of that anyway. You can say all the "right things" and they can still think you were lame. Or, you can totally bomb and they could think you were funny, real, and authentic (**that's my favorite way to do it**).

But either way, **we can't control** what they are going to think about us so we might as well not even try to.

The goal of any conversation is not to try to get the other person to think a certain way about us. The goal of any conversation is to **just be you** and let them think whatever they want about it

Now if you're thinking that being you is the worst, then **that's a confidence issue** and I deal with confidence more in the Headspace Arena.

You can get access to my trainings for teens in **all the Hero Arenas** in my gamified mindset training program, Sidekick to Hero.

It **feels like a video game** but teaches confidence, emotional control, relationship skills, and how to achieve your goals.

It is totally awesome and you can sign up for a two-week free trial at sidekicktohero.com



Alright, so we've covered the first three letters of cape, C-A-P, carry the conversation, assume they actually want to talk to you, and give them permission to think whatever they want about you.

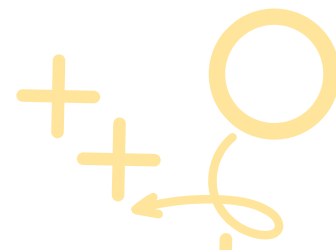
Those are the main mindset moves to make to start conversations easier. **Practice those mindsets every day** in the morning BEFORE you set out to start conversations.

Now, the last part of CAPE is E, and it's **the trick to make any conversation easier**.

But before I tell it to you remember, that talking to other people is like **75% knowing what to think** and only 25% knowing what to say.

But once I tell you this trick you'll be like, **"Oh, that's so easy, I'll just do that!"** and then you'll skip all the mindset moves and just go straight to the trick every time.

It won't work nearly as well, so don't do that. **Always do the mindset moves!** You promise? For realsies?? Okay.



E stands for Elaborate, that's the conversation trick I've learned to help me know what to say.

A conversation is just the **exchange of information**. Information is the lifeblood of a conversation. The more information you have, the more alive the conversation will be.

A Dead Conversation

You: Did you see the game this weekend?

Them: Yeah, it was cool.

You: Yeah, cool.



A Living Conversation

You: Hey, did you see the Chiefs beat the Packers this weekend?

Them: I did, me and my sister were watching it. Every time they showed Taylor Swift in the stands, she was like "Oh my gosh, there's Taylor Swift!!"

You: Oh, that's so annoying! That pass Travis Kelce threw in the fourth quarter, how legendary was that?

Dead conversations have very little information. The second conversation is much more alive! More annoying, because it mentions "Swelce" and I'm so over them! But you get the point!

So, to keep a conversation alive, **get as much information as you can into it!**

Now, there are really only **two ways to add information** to a conversation, you get the other person to add it by asking questions or you can add info yourself.

Ask Questions

Getting the other person to add information is the easiest way to do it. People generally love talking about themselves, so **just ask them questions** about them and they'll happily add more information to the conversation.

Add Info Yourself

Sometimes the other person is not really a talker or won't know what to say, and **that's when you step in** and add information. Answer the question you just asked them yourself, for example.

Now, one last general tip when it comes to elaborating, or adding more information, think **baby steps**.

One mistake I see people make all the time is jumping from one topic to another too quickly without really spending any time on one.

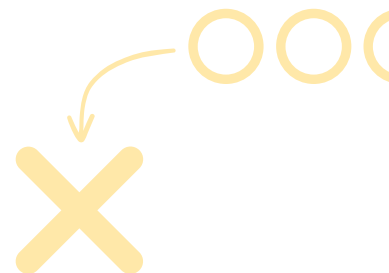
“What’s your favorite food? Italian? That’s cool. Do you listen to music? Awesome, I like them too. Where did you get your shoes? Neat, I’m wearing sandals.”

That’s exhausting!

Every topic has so much to explore, so much information that can be added. So think baby steps

E is for Elaborate! To keep a conversation alive, just get more information into it.

Recap



To help you get started with starting conversations, I’ve included a list of a bunch of questions that teens can use to start conversations.

But remember, **those questions won’t get the job done all by themselves**. You gotta put on your conversation CAPE.

Start with the three mindset moves:

- **C - Choose to carry the conversation**
- **A - Assume the other person wants to talk to you**
- **P - Give them permission to think whatever they want about you**

Then use my conversation trick, **Elaborate**, to get more information out there by either asking them questions or adding information yourself.

Final Points!

You are someone **worth** talking to and you're better at it than you think.

You have great conversations with your close friends and family **all the time**.

That's because you're wearing your **conversation cape** without thinking about it.

Then you take it off when you're talking to new people.

Put on the cape and go make new friends.

Now get out there and live life in hero mode!



Simple Conversation Starters For Teens

Here is my list of 10 simple questions that you can say, word-for-word, that will help you start a conversation. But remember! You still need to use the Conversation CAPE. Saying the “right thing” can only take you so far.

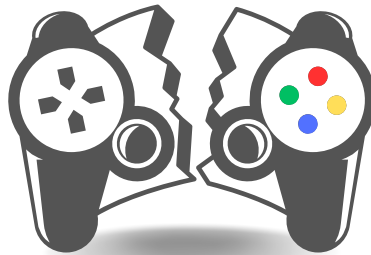
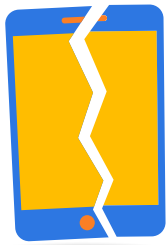
1. What do you do for fun when you're not here?
2. What's your go-to song right now?
3. How's [A SPECIFIC CLASS] going for you this year?
4. Got any cool tech hacks to help me out with BLANK?
5. Any idea what you want to do after high school?
6. Best character of all time. Who is it?
7. Seen any good memes recently?
8. Anything exciting planned for the weekend?
9. What's something you can do better than anyone else?
10. What's your favorite app right now?



Teen HERO Training

Headspace - Emotions - Relationships - Objectives

Live Your own LIFE



CHALLENGE



sidekicktohero.com

Welcome to the Live Your Own Life Challenge!

My name is Joey Mascio and I am a life coach who helps teens build more confidence, improve social skills, and achieve their goals. I call it going from **Sidekick to Hero**.

Essentially, I help teens become more **awesome**.

Right now I want to ask you, are you as awesome as you want to be? Do you feel like you are succeeding in all the areas of your life?

When I talk to teens, most feel like they are **not as awesome** as they'd like to be in one or more of these three areas:



Socially

- They have some friends, but talking with other people can be tough.
- They don't think they really have the confidence to connect with people.
- They feel different from others, in a bad way.



Emotionally

- They just feel down sometimes.
- It's not like they have depression, but they just don't feel motivated some days
- At times they're bothered by stress and anxiety about things
- Life is just too much!



Personally

- They have goals but they can't seem to reach them because they just feel so distracted all the time
- Yeah, I'd love to work out more, but... video games
- Yeah, I'd love to get my homework done sooner, but... YouTube
- Yeah, I'd love to start that project or make some money, but... Netflix

In a nutshell, their life would be more awesome if it weren't for those times they felt **disconnected, down, and distracted.** ³⁷

How do you rank yourself in each one of those categories? If any of that sounds like you, then I got great news...

You're not alone and I know how to help you become the person you want to be.

The Mass Neurotic Triad

One day I was reading the words of the famous psychiatrist **Viktor Frankl** and he talked about something that most people today are experiencing.

Something called the **Mass Neurotic Triad** which includes:

DEPRESSION, ADDICTION, AND AGGRESSION

I always think how what I'm reading can help the teens that I work with and I thought,

"This doesn't apply to the teens I work with. I work with typical, everyday teens who are succeeding in many areas of their lives. They don't really suffer from depression, addiction, and aggression."

But then I thought of the things my teen clients say when they're **not reaching their goals.** They say things like, "I don't feel like it," "I don't have enough time," and "People are stupid."

And it hit me. That totally fits into the Mass Neurotic Triad! We all experience it, just at **different levels.**

Instead of depression, addiction, and aggression most teens feel **down, distracted, and disconnected.**

~~DEPRESSION, ADDICTION, AND AGGRESSION~~

DOWN, DISTRACTED, AND DISCONNECTED

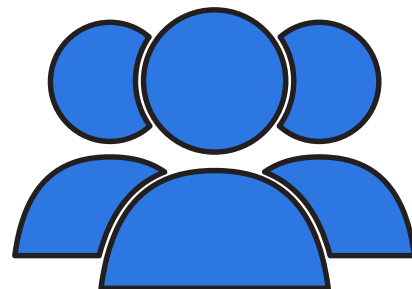
The Cause

Teens are feeling down, distracted, and disconnected in **record numbers** today.

Why is this? Is it just teen hormones? Um, **yeah**, those play a huge role.

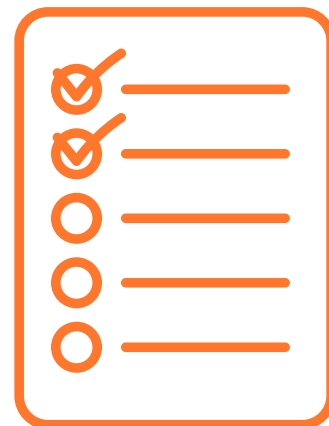
But there is one thing teens don't do that specifically make it worse. They don't spend enough time **living their own life**.

Now, I don't mean to make a general statement about teens. Maybe you spend lots of time living your own life. Then the rest of this PDF will show you exactly how you're rocking life. **Go you!**



But, most people, not just teens, but most **people** out there are not spending enough time living their own lives.

There are two ways we are not living our own lives. First, we don't spend enough time with **real people**. Second, we don't spend enough time **working toward our goals**. Let's talk about each.



Connecting with Real People

First, we don't spend enough time with real people.

Why? Because we are spending too much time with our **imaginary friends**.

Wait, I don't have imaginary friends. I'm not a three year old!

True, but I said imaginary, not invisible.

Check out the people on the next page...

Do some of these “**friends**” look familiar?



Or how about some of these “**people?**”



Or how much **time** do you spend with these folks?



I call them imaginary friends because spending time with them **CANNOT** give you the same connection that spending time with real people can.

And that **connection** is one of the antidotes to the Mass Neurotic Triad, feeling down, distracted, and disconnected.

When you watch influencers and celebrities on YouTube and TikTok, you are spending time in a **one-sided relationship**. You admire them and they don't even know you exist.

When you play video games you are spending time and energy **leveling up a fake life** in a pretend world, not gaining any skills you can use in the real world to help you grow into the person you want to become.

When you stream your favorite shows you are watching pretend heroes overcome their obstacles while **not overcoming any your own**.

When you do each of these things, you spend more time living someone else's life and less time **living your own life**.

Working Toward our Goals

Second, we don't spend enough time working toward our goals.

To start, do you even have goals? And if you do have goals, how come you don't spend **as much time as you want** working toward them?

Goals like:

- Bench pressing 200 pounds
- Getting straight As
- Running a 10k
- Making money
- Making more friends
- Getting a boyfriend or girlfriend
- Getting in better shape for the upcoming season of your sport of choice
- Drawing, writing, or painting more
- Doing more service for other people

We love our goals when we have them! We know if we reached them we would be the person **we want to be**. But...we instead spend more time with our fingers on electronics.

Or just laying around doing nothing and we don't get any closer to our goals so we start telling ourselves over and over that reaching our desired goal is really hard, nay, **impossible!** Then the worst thing of all happens... we *start believing that!!*

Why do we do that?? Well, this is why...

What Motivates Us

Psychologists say our brain is designed to be motivated to **seek pleasure, avoid pain, and conserve energy.**

Or, translated into teen speak: **have fun, stay comfortable, and relax.**

Doesn't that just sound like everything you want to do ever? And nothing like any of the following things:

- Working out
- Doing homework
- Going for a run
- Working at a job
- Talking to new people
- Talking to your crush
- Doing sprints
- Staring at a blank piece of paper trying to come up with something to draw, write, or paint
- Or helping an old lady move stuff or clean stuff?

None of that stuff is fun, comfortable, or relaxing, but it's what we gotta do to reach our goals, at least the goals listed on the last page (you gotta come up with your **own list!**).

Our brain isn't motivated to do those things. So **we avoid them** by doing things that are fun, comfortable, and relaxing.

Do ya **see the cycle here?** When we don't achieve our goals, we are more likely to feel down, disconnected and distracted which leads us to seek out the things that are fun, comfortable, and relaxing!

The Solution

So, what do I do, Joey? Are you telling me I need to cut out all social media, tv shows, and video games? Cuz I'm not prepared to do that! I'm not prepared to cut out my happiness!!!

Whoa, calm down, bro. I'm not saying doing any of these things are bad. What I am saying is that if you feel down, disconnected, and distracted, then it may be because you spend **MORE** time doing these things than living your own life.

The simple solution is to adjust the scales, **shift the balance** of your life. Which leads us to our challenge.

The Live Your Own Life Challenge

I challenge you to live your own life **MORE**
and **BEFORE** you live someone else's life.
Every day.

What do I mean by living your own life? There are at least **two things** you can do that qualify as living your own life.

- One, connecting with real people in your life
- Two, doing meaningful work

Let's go over both.

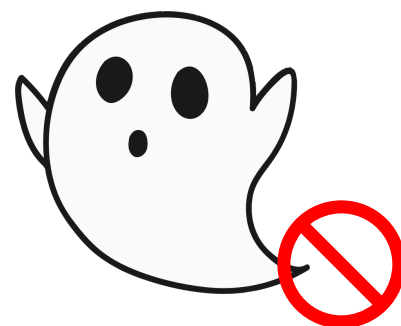
Connecting with Real People

What does connecting with someone real even mean?

Well, first figure out who the **real people** are around you. If you are the only one that can see them then they're probably not real. And you probably need to see a specialist or a Ghostbuster or something.

People like your parents, your siblings, extended family, neighbors, people from church or your community, friends, peers, strangers... pretty much **anybody** you can poke in the eye.

But don't actually poke them in the eye.



Next, what does connecting with real people **look like?**

It looks like experiencing something with them. **Together.** It can be a conversation, a board game, a hike, a project, an outside activity, sports, cooking, baking, etc.

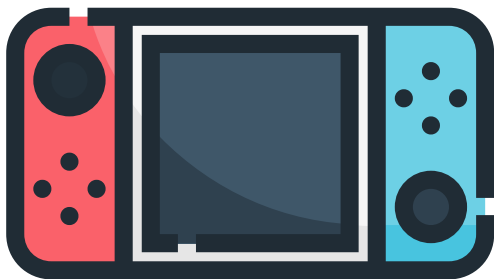
And before you try to find a loophole and say “Well I’m going to spend 30 minutes playing video games with my friends,” **it can’t involve screens,** for the sake of the challenge.

Doing Meaningful Work

Meaningful work is anything that **moves you closer** to achieving your goals.

Yes, meaningful work is probably not going to be fun, comfortable and relaxing. But, if you want to become the person you want to be, you need to get really good at **feeling uncomfortable.** Because discomfort leads to growth and growth leads to happiness and happiness is the best!

But you can’t get it unless you pay the price. And **the price is discomfort.**



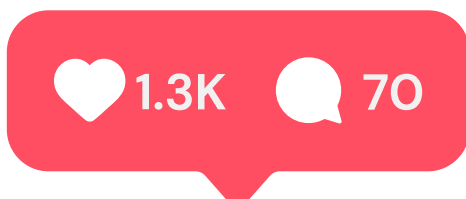
Imitation of Achievements

How do you do it? How does one get themselves to **put the fun stuff aside** and get the meaningful work done?

You do it by realizing you don’t really want to play video games, watch YouTube, or stream shows **as much as you do.**

What you really want is to have a sense of achievement, to triumph over your challenges, **to feel important.**

Those digital distractions produce an **imitation** of those things, but they’re not real. It’s not you living your own life.



Imitation of importance

Do you not believe in relaxing, Joey???

Of course I do. I love kicking back and playing a video game or watching a movie to relax.

But is the time you're spending on screens really relaxing? **Or is it distracting?**

How do you tell the difference? Easy.

**When you do meaningful work first, and the fun stuff second.
That's relaxing.**

**But when you do the fun stuff first, and meaningful work
second... or never. That's distracting.**

Also, the amount of time you spend on each is a good indicator. If you are spending **MORE** time improving the life of some video game character than improving your own life, then that's distraction.

"Alright, I did 5 jumping jacks now let me play Call of Duty for three hours!!"

Your life is the **most important** life you're in charge of. So, make it the best one you can.

Challenge Recap

I challenge you to live your own life **MORE** and **BEFORE** you live someone else's life.

Every day you should clock in **MORE** time connecting with real people in your life or working toward your real life goals **BEFORE** you spend time on things like social media, YouTube, or Netflix.

And your hours in school **DON'T COUNT**. That might seem unfair, but this is why: the work to achieve most of your goals are done outside of school hours. I don't want you **falling into the trap** that most adults are in right now, where they work at their job during the day, come home and veg all evening, and spend decades never moving closer to their goals.

I don't want that for you.

I know it'll be tough. But this is something I know you can do.

You were meant to do **great things** and none of them are on a screen.

Now, get out there and live your life in hero mode!

