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teen Breathe

MINI MAG

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Welcome

We have created this mini edition to give you a taste of *Teen Breathe Magazine Australia.*

Are you mindful? The word seems to be everywhere these days. But what does it really mean? Well, it's about paying attention in a particular way that encourages curiosity (not as easy as you'd imagine!). Mindfulness helps you to understand how your mind works so you can appreciate all the good things in life – no matter how small they may seem.

Here at *Teen Breathe*, we believe mindfulness forms the basis of a happier, healthier, more authentic life. Within each issue, you can enjoy inspiring articles, creative activities, tips and lists, to help you explore how paying attention to everything you do and being curious, kind, and staying positive can bring out the very best of you.

So find a comfy, quiet place, let go of your worries from the day, and enjoy!

Madi

Cover art by Moly Toby

Teen Breathe Magazine Australia is a bi-monthly publication available at your favourite newsagent.

WWW.TEENBREATHE.COM.AU

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So, what is mindfulness, anyway?

MINDFULNESS IS PAYING ATTENTION. THINK THAT'S REALLY EASY? READ ON...

Who needs to practise paying attention – after all, it's a breeze, isn't it? For some, maybe. But for most it's harder than you might think. You might not realise it, but a lot of time is spent on autopilot, carrying out tasks and activities and even conversations without a lot of awareness of what you're doing. Have you ever got to the bottom of a page in a book and realised you haven't actually read anything you were 'reading'? Or have you ever said something to someone that you immediately wished you hadn't?

Mindfulness is also about paying attention in a particular way. When we are mindful, we are curious. Instead of thinking we know exactly what is going to happen, we leave open the possibility that things could be entirely different from our expectations.

This is why many of the features and activities in *Teen Breathe* will involve bringing your awareness to your breath, your feelings, your thoughts or perhaps the sensations in your body. It might seem silly at first to focus so carefully on your breath, but what you are doing is really important – you are practising the crucial skill of paying attention.

"Mindfulness is paying attention with curiosity and without judgement...

...and it's something you can practise at any time."

THE CAMERA VIEW

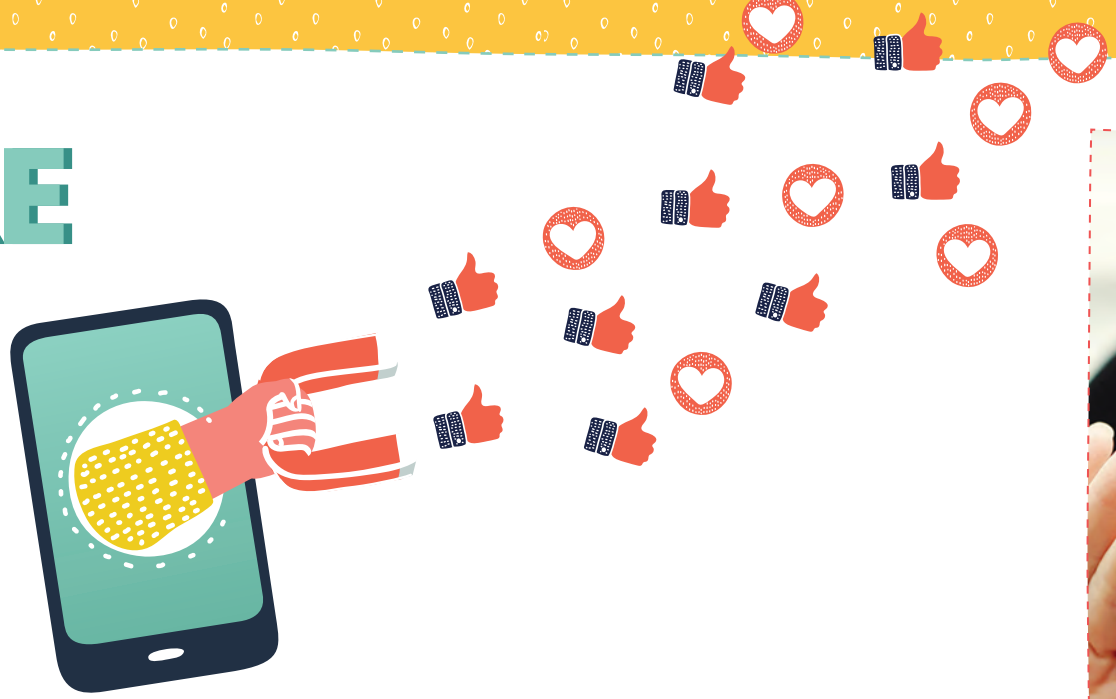
Mindfulness is also about paying attention without judgement. It's your brain's job to constantly evaluate things to make sure you are safe. With mindfulness, you try to observe things like a camera would, capturing what is actually happening, and not adding anything else. What might this look like? Imagine your teacher asks everyone to close their eyes, and then asks you to listen to a bell she is ringing. You bring your attention to the sound and you immediately notice all the judgements your mind starts to make about something as minor as the sound of a bell.

Your thoughts might look like the column on the left, where the judging mind adds all sorts of captions to what is happening

THE JUDGING MIND **Camera view + captions**	PAYING ATTENTION WITHOUT JUDGEMENT **Camera view only**
'This bell is really loud. I don't like it. I wish it were softer. I wish the sound would stop.'	*'This bell is loud.'*
'The sound of the bell is fading away. I really liked the sound of the bell and I hope she rings it again.'	*'The sound of the bell is fading away.'*

LIST SOMETHING YOU COULD DO MORE MINDFULLY

BEWARE WHAT YOU SHARE



IT'S SO SIMPLE TO CLICK AND SEND, BUT SOME THINGS SHOULD NEVER BE POSTED - YOU NEVER KNOW WHO MIGHT VIEW THEM FURTHER DOWN THE LINE

How much sharing is too much when it comes to social media? No doubt you have a friend who updates their statuses or stories several times a day, but there are certain things you should be careful about sharing, especially if you're adding people you don't really know.

YOUR HOME ADDRESS

You'd think this was common sense, but some people do check-in at their home address. Criminals find easy targets on social media and will piece together information about where they live and what items they have that are worth stealing – then, they'll figure out who lives there and when they aren't at home. Even more worrying is the fact that some people will post when they are home alone. You may think you know everyone reading your status, but you never can be 100 percent sure.

ANGRY TALK

You might not like someone or have had a falling out with a friend but discussing that person and ranting about them on social media could get you into a lot of trouble. If someone sees it and spreads the word, you risk your relationship with that person for good and could also lose a lot of respect from others. Save your rants for when you're face-to-face with your friends or family, or better still, try to resolve the problem.

POSTS YOUR FUTURE SELF WILL REGRET

Be wary about the images you post and the way you present yourself. Even when you delete posts, future bosses or the police can still find them, so it's best to think twice before swearing, posing for photos that could be embarrassing in the future or posting things that could be offensive to others.

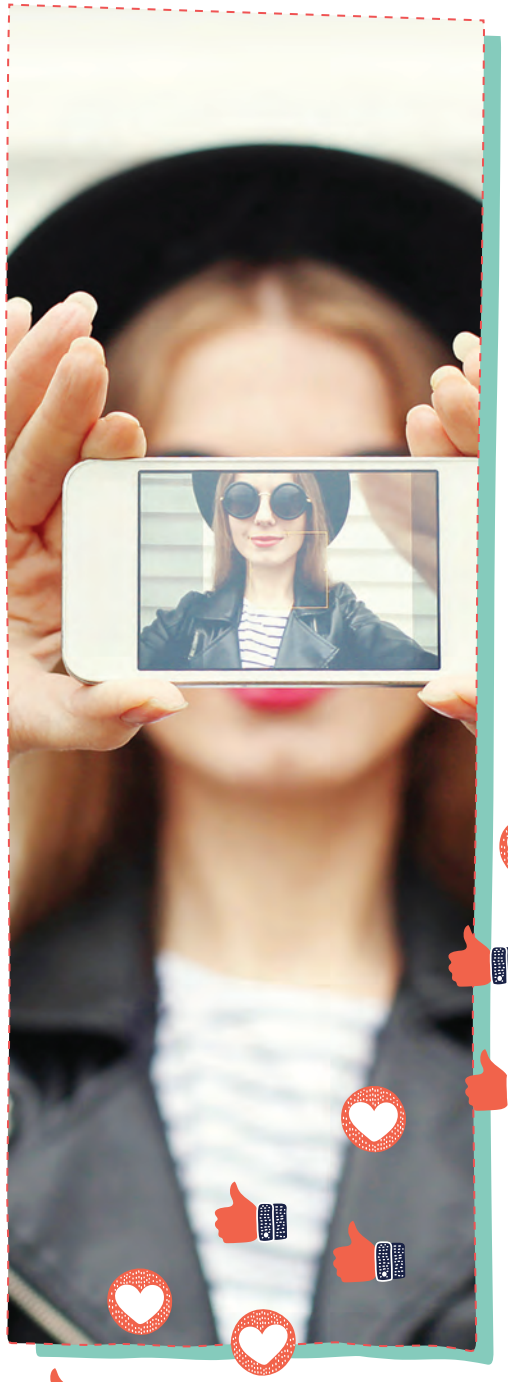
WORDS: DONNA FINDLAY.

POSTS THAT RIDICULE OTHERS

A random photo of someone who's unaware you're taking it might seem funny to you, but remember it's someone's relative, a person who has feelings and you have no idea of their situation or personal circumstances. The same goes for videos, especially of adults or peers at school.

FINAL THOUGHTS

Social media is a great way to keep in touch and connect with those around you, but think: do I really want everyone to see this? Would I be happy with my gran, a teacher, my little cousin or a complete stranger seeing this photo or reading this update? If not, take a deep breath and don't post, knowing you're probably saving yourself a lot of trouble in the long run.



THE ART OF compliments

TELLING A FRIEND YOU ADMIRE THEIR STYLE, WISH YOU SHARED THEIR MATHEMATICAL BRAIN OR ADORE THE WAY THEY USE COLOUR IN THEIR PAINTINGS DOESN'T COST ANYTHING AND CAN HAVE A POWERFUL IMPACT. AND IT CAN BE MUCH MORE REWARDING THAN YOU THINK...

Recognising the positives about others and sharing our appreciation is a key life skill – it lifts spirits and strengthens relationships. But think also how compliments can make people shine. Best of all, they benefit both parties: the giver becomes a source of happiness while the receiver's self-esteem and motivation gets a lift. So when was the last time you paid a sincere compliment and when did you last receive one? Be generous and don't withhold praise believing that it will somehow take away your self-worth. The more you perform little acts of kindness, the better you will feel about yourself. And don't forget that expressing gratitude leads to more fulfilling experiences as well as being an effective way to increase your own and other people's happiness.

WORDS: ANNE GUILLOT.

HOW TO PAY A COMPLIMENT

Complimenting somebody should be as easy to do as a simple pat on the back, but sometimes it's simply not. Here are rules on how to pay a compliment effectively:

BE SPONTANEOUS

Compliments should come naturally, with no ulterior motives, and should be delivered at an appropriate time. It shouldn't look premeditated, say, as a way of asking for something in return.

BE OBSERVANT

Paying attention is critical. What makes this person so special and worthy of your praise? Have they improved on a skill, altered their look or worked hard on something? They will love that you have noticed.

BE SPECIFIC

When expressing your appreciation, look further and comment on something deeper. A vague compliment lacks real meaning and is unlikely to leave a lasting impression.

BE SINCERE

A compliment should come from the heart so make sure you mean it and sound like you mean it. 'Your hair looks great,' can be interpreted in many different ways depending on the tone of your voice.

HOW TO RECEIVE AND APPRECIATE A COMPLIMENT

Lots of people tend to discount or ignore compliments because of a lack of trust in others or their own low self-esteem. Here are a few ways you can learn how to appreciate them:

DON'T BE EMBARRASSED

A compliment can be an easy way to start a conversation and break the ice, so appreciate the comment made. It may be hard for the other person to make compliments so be proud and grateful of their recognition.

ACCEPT GRACIOUSLY

Smile, make eye contact and say a simple, 'thank you'. No more, no less – it's the polite and contented way to acknowledge a compliment. And the more often you do it, the easier it gets.

CHERISH IT

We all need compliments and praise to build our confidence, so it is important to remember such empowering, kind words and, hopefully, others will do the same when you pay them a compliment.

Better body image

NO ONE IS PERFECT SO STOP BEING UNKIND TO YOURSELF AND LEARN TO LOVE YOUR BODY, QUIRKS AND ALL

How do you feel when you look in the mirror? Do you find yourself criticising little details or complaining 'I'm too short' or 'if only I had different eyebrows/hair/feet I'd be happy'?

If you're frequently making negative comments about your appearance, you're not alone. You can be confident that most of your peers will be equally as critical of their looks, especially given all the physical changes that happen as you get older. But while it's normal not to like every part of yourself, for some it becomes so extreme it affects everyday life. This is because body image – how you see your face and body – is closely linked to self-esteem. If you aren't happy with your body, you will lack confidence. If you have a positive body image, however, you will be happier and healthier both mentally and physically.

WHAT AFFECTS HOW YOU SEE YOURSELF?

SHAPESHIFTING

As you mature, your body shape changes in ways you may and may not like. Hormones can also make you feel more sensitive and self-conscious about your appearance as you want to fit in, be accepted and carve your own identity.

FRIENDS AND FAMILY

Without realising it, you become influenced by your friends as they also change and start wearing make-up, having different hairstyles and clothes. You may want to be like them or create your own style – but it can get you down if you start comparing yourself to them. Remember, everyone is different and that's what makes each of us unique.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Think how many friends post images of themselves on social media for others to 'like' or comment on. How people react to photos can have a huge impact on body image and self-confidence. If someone responds with a mean comment it could negatively affect the individual, even if it is just 'banter'. On the other hand, 100 likes could boost their self-esteem no end.

HOW TO DEAL WITH NEGATIVE COMMENTS

There will always be one person you know who, because of their own insecurities, will mock others' appearances. If you are at the receiving end of their insensitive comments, there are a few things you can do:

- **Talk to a friend.** It's good to vent to someone you trust. They can advise you on what to do as they will see the person's comments from a different perspective.
- **Confide in a teacher.** If it happens at school, talk to a staff member about it so they can help resolve the problem and find ways to boost your self-esteem.
- **Tell the culprit.** If you feel it's best, tell the person who's upset you why their comment is unkind. Be calm and avoid arguing. They may not realise they are being hurtful.

WORDS: DONNA FINDLAY. PHOTOGRAPH: OMAR LOPEZ

HOW TO IMPROVE SELF-ESTEEM AND BODY IMAGE

ACCEPT YOUR AMAZING SELF AND STOP COMPARING YOUR FEATURES TO OTHER PEOPLE'S

This is you – unique, wonderful you. In real life, very few people fit into the airbrushed, picture-perfect ideal in the media, so instead of worrying what's wrong with you, focus on what's right, such as how strong and healthy you are. This is your body and you should be most proud of it.

SILENCE YOUR INNER CRITIC

Whenever you become aware you're thinking negative thoughts about yourself, say 'stop'. Imagine what advice you'd give to a friend or young child who was putting themselves down and pay heed to these wise words. You wouldn't suggest they be unkind.

COMPLIMENT YOURSELF

Each day, look in the mirror and focus on something you like. It could be your eye colour, your skin, your smile. Pay yourself a compliment instead of being harsh on yourself as this will boost your mood. You may not believe yourself to start with, but stick with it as eventually you'll start noticing they come naturally.

REMIND YOURSELF OF WHAT'S IMPORTANT - WHO YOU ARE

If you're a good-hearted, kind person and you're healthy, that's way more important than looks. Everyone has body issues at some point – it's part of life – but clichéd as it sounds, it really is what's inside that counts.

BY POPULAR DEMAND

NOT EVERYONE IS AS COOL AND CLEVER AS THEY'D LIKE YOU TO BELIEVE. SO START HAVING FAITH IN THE PERSON WHO MATTERS MOST - YOU

Do you ever look at people and wish you were like them? There are students at every school who are labelled as 'cool'. They're popular and everyone wants to be their friend. All their Instagram posts seem to have lots of likes, and they always seem to be out and about, wearing fashionable clothes and doing amazing things.

In comparison, you may feel you don't fit in or have as many friends. You may dream to be that popular person or part of the cool group whose selfies are complimented by thousands and who attend every party happening. It's easy to start questioning why you aren't 'liked' as much as them, so here are some tips to help you realise that being popular isn't everything...

WORDS: DONNA FINDLAY.

WHAT IS POPULARITY ANYWAY?

Take time to think what it is about the popular people that you like. Do you really agree with their views and what they stand for? Would you change your hobbies and lifestyle to be like them? Or do you simply want to have that feeling of being validated? Popularity isn't everything. If you're a good, kind and honest person, that goes a long way to helping you succeed in life.

FOCUS ON THE MOST IMPORTANT PERSON - YOU!

If you're going to compare yourself to anyone, compare yourself to you. Everyone can try to be a better version of themselves, whether it's improving artistic skills, fitness or developing as a person. Celebrate the improvements you make in your life each week and be proud of your achievements and how far you've come.

ACCEPT YOUR DIFFERENCES

Accept who you are and how brilliant you are. Look around at all the people at your school and you'll see they're all different in how they look and act. Instead of comparing yourself to any of them, focus on all the good things about yourself. Ask someone you trust what your best characteristics are and be proud of these. Few people receive regular compliments so it may be weird to listen to, but also nice – and when you realise this and feel a glow inside, it could inspire you to give a compliment to someone else who may need a boost.

TALK TO SOMEONE

If you are really struggling with the fact you're not as 'popular' as you would like, seek help to improve your self-image and confidence. Speak to a parent or teacher about how you feel. Many adults will tell you that feeling unpopular or as though you don't fit in is a part of life – it's just something few people admit. The older you get, the more people you'll meet from different walks of life, and suddenly popularity won't matter any more. One day you'll look back and wish you hadn't wasted so much time and energy comparing yourself to others as you are fantastic just as you are.

My Heroes

WHO IN YOUR EVERYDAY LIFE INSPIRES YOU?
DRAW THEIR PORTRAIT IN THE SPACES PROVIDED

Extract from
Teen Breathe Inspirational Planner
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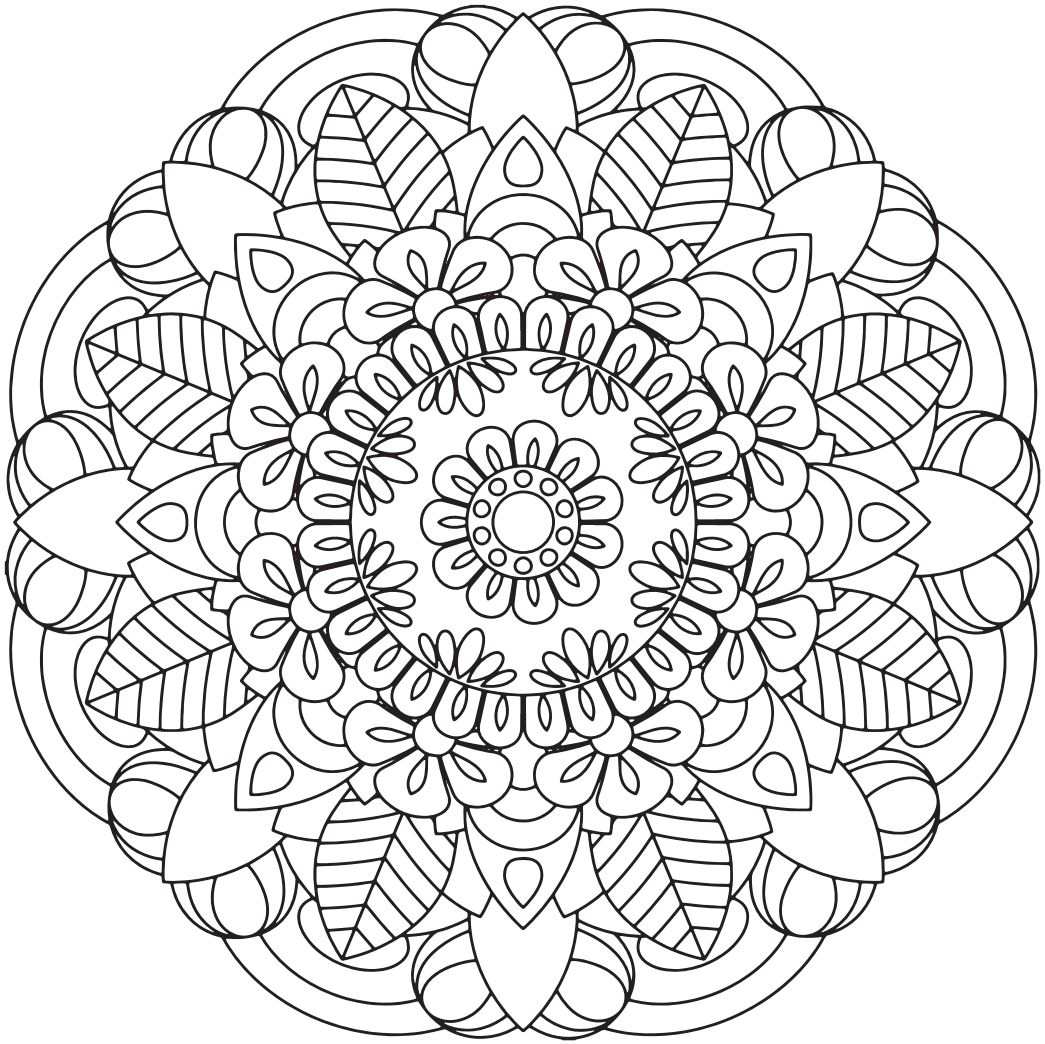

Discover the *Teen Breathe* magazine collection

Australia's #1 mindfulness magazine for teens and tweens. *Teen Breathe* is the ultimate go-to guide for teens and tweens wanting to explore how being mindful in everything you do, and being curious, kind and positive can create a happier, healthier and more authentic life. Teen Breathe's inspirational planner is the perfect space to plan your hopes and dreams. The Eco Special is filled with earth-saving acts and inspiration for climate-conscious teens.

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SENSE AND sensitivity

FAR FROM BEING WEAK AND FRAGILE, THE SOFT SOULS AMONG US HAVE A HIDDEN STRENGTH

ACCEPT WHO YOU ARE

Do you struggle not to cry if someone raises their voice at you? Do seemingly small things reduce you to tears? Being tense and touchy are some of the traits of a sensitive person. If this sounds like you, try not to resent this part of yourself and instead accept it as an asset that makes you more perceptive and intuitive.

A GIFT IN DISGUISE

You're lucky enough to have the ability to feel and see things that others may not. You also have the power to develop what some regard as a disadvantage into a positive inner force. Consider it an opportunity to grow and learn. By having a greater sensory perception, you can sense the nuances of beauty, especially in arts or nature, but also in all the little things that make life wonderful.

CHERISH THE DIFFERENCE

Some people think it's better to disguise your feelings or pretend you don't have them. Showing your feelings – good or bad – is not a curse.

There's no reason to be ashamed because you're sensitive, so don't feel you have to be tough in front of others.

ENHANCE YOUR RELATIONSHIPS

Know that your openness to the world allows you to interact better with others: you can more easily interpret people's emotions and understand their pain. Being able to empathise with someone is a genuine gift – try to cherish it. And it might be that your ability to show your own feelings will have a positive effect on those around you.

SEE SENSITIVITY AS A STRENGTH

Being sensitive can be hard... but if you embrace your sensitive nature to the fullest, you can appreciate the many benefits it offers in everyday life, from noticing the little things to being able to comfort others, from feeling more intensely to truly caring. Don't think you have to change to fit in, instead nurture it because being a sensitive soul is a sign of strength – not weakness.

WORDS: ANNE GUILLOT.

ARE YOU A SENSITIVE PERSON?

Have difficulty letting go of negative thoughts and emotions?

Y N

Worry about what others think?

Y N

Take things personally?

Y N

Detail oriented and think deeply?

Y N

Cry when watching sad (and sometimes even happy) movies?

Y N

Get upset if you make a bad decision?

Y N

Feel under pressure when observed doing a task?

Y N

The more questions to which you've answered yes, the greater the likelihood that you have the gift of sense and sensitivity.

RISE ABOVE

MOST PEOPLE LIKE TO BE LIKED. HUMANS ARE HIGHLY SOCIABLE CREATURES WHO LOVE CONNECTING WITH OTHERS. SADLY, HOWEVER, THERE WILL ALWAYS BE PEOPLE IN LIFE WHO FOR ONE REASON OR ANOTHER – OR EVEN FOR NO REASON – SIMPLY AREN'T YOUR BIGGEST FAN. BUT THERE ARE WAYS TO COPE...

WORDS: DONNA FINDLAY.

1 THINK IT THROUGH

Take time to think through the overall situation. Did you do something wrong? If so, you can try to resolve the problem by apologising, talking to the person concerned or writing them a letter. This may not change their opinion of you, or they may need some time and space, but at least you've tried to make peace. If you did make a mistake, learn from it, but don't beat yourself up about it. After all, everyone makes mistakes.

2 IS IT WORTH THE UPSET?

If you haven't done anything wrong, consider how important this person is to you and how much you want to be their friend. One of the biggest lessons in life is that not everyone gets along – and this stands for all ages. There may be personality clashes or it could be the other person is ingenuine or simply downright mean. Quite often, when someone dislikes others for no reason, it's because of their own deep-rooted fears or negative feelings they have about themself. Maybe they're envious or doubtful of their own greatness. Instead of fighting fire with fire, treat them with kindness, empathy and compassion. Happy hearts make the world go round.

3 REMEMBER WHO COUNTS

Forget the person draining your energy and remember who you need to look after most – yourself. Consider all the lovely friends and family you do have. They're proof you're a good person. Just because one individual doesn't like you, doesn't automatically make you someone terrible. It means that, for some reason, you're this person's target and you're probably one of many. Speak to your friends, family or a trusted adult about the situation and they'll reassure you not to worry.

4 DO WHAT MAKES YOU HAPPY

It can be hard to get over painful feelings, but remember you're in control of how you deal with situations. Do things which make you feel better and will occupy your mind, such as seeing true friends, doing some exercise or going to the movies. Perhaps join a group to meet more like-minded people. There are many other lovely potential new friends out there waiting to be introduced, so focus on what matters – you and those who are closest to you.

5 FINAL ADVICE

Dealing with people who don't like you for whatever reason can happen at any age – at school, university or the workplace. Some people will never change and you may never know what their problem is. Remember, their feelings towards you are a reflection of them and may have nothing to do with you at all. Shake it off, rise above and treat them with kindness anyway, it's exactly what they need.

STAND LIKE A TREE

Have you ever stopped to observe a tree? It stands tall and strong, rooted in the ground, surviving all seasons. Practising Vrksasana, or Tree pose, helps you to stand equally as tall and strong. A grounding posture, it brings peace and calm to your mind and body while lengthening your spine and strengthening your calves and ankles.

HERE'S HOW TO GET INTO THE POSE

Stand with your arms by your side – palms open and facing forwards. Take a moment to breathe deeply, connect with your core and ground your feet with the earth below.

On an inhale breath, bring your hands into prayer pose at the centre of your chest. Take a few breaths enjoying the peace and calm of this position.

Shift your weight onto your right foot. Imagine it has roots growing into the ground.

Slowly bend your left knee and then gently place the sole of your left foot against your right leg – you can use your hand to guide your foot. It can be along your inner thigh or the lower part of your leg, anywhere along the leg that feels comfortable, but NEVER against the knee (this can cause injury).

On an exhale breath, raise your palms in prayer pose above your head. Take a few deep breaths in this position, with your chest and shoulders open wide and legs strong and grounded.

Lower your arms back down to prayer pose in front of your chest and lower your left foot back to standing position.

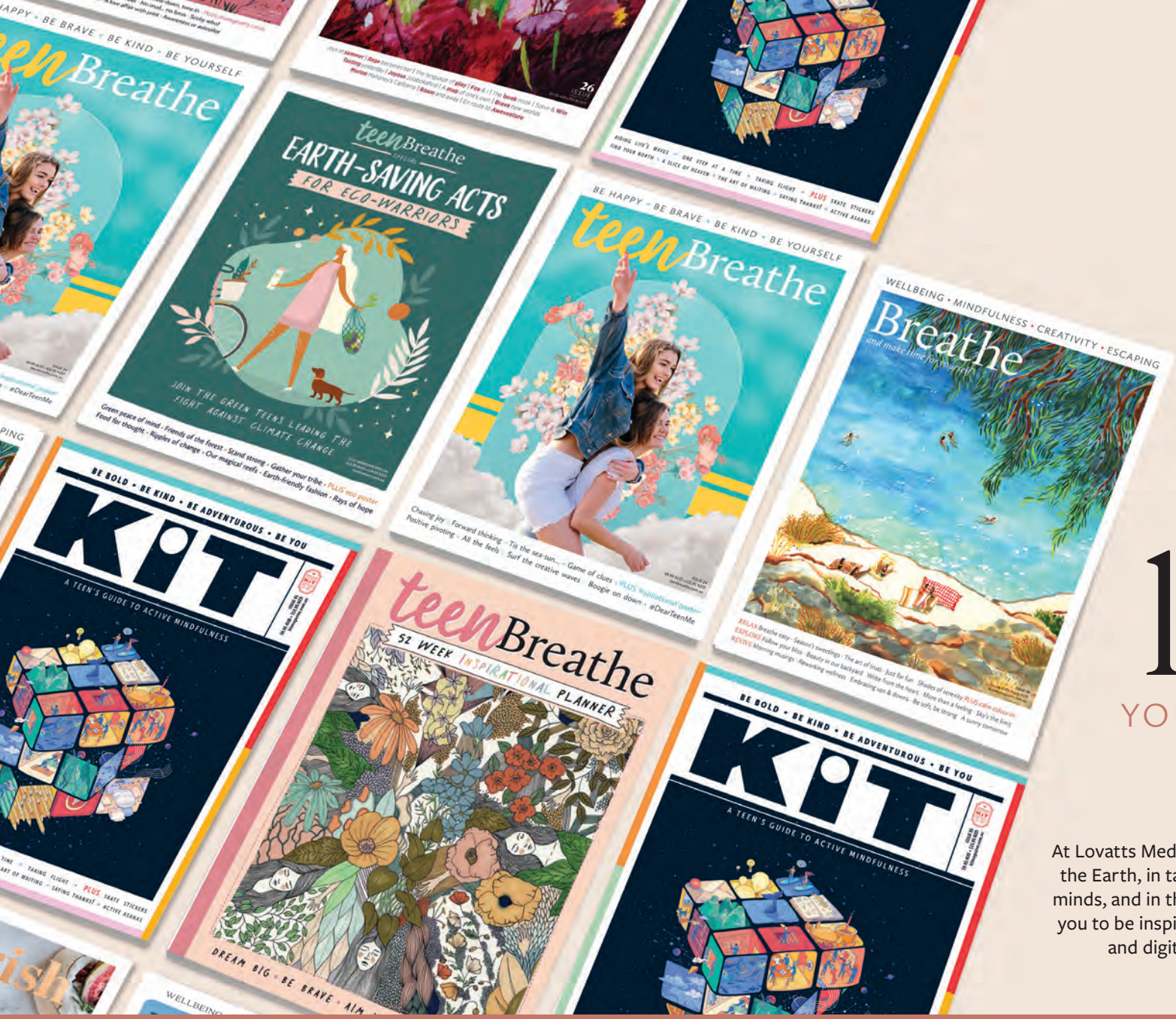
Take a moment to observe how your body feels. Now repeat the exercise on the other side of your body, grounding through your left leg and bringing your right foot to your left thigh. Practising Tree pose on both sides will bring balance to your body. Stay grounded. You will soon be as strong, tall and majestic as a mighty eucalypt.

TOP TIPS

If you feel a bit wobbly, open your arms wide to help maintain balance.

To maintain focus, keep your eyes open and direct your gaze towards a fixed object directly ahead of you.

Words: **Dawattie Basdeo**
A kids and young adults yoga teacher. For details, visit **magnificentmemagnificentyou.com**.
Younger children should be supervised.



live

YOUR BEST LIFE

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Be inspired. Live mindfully. Create your best life.

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WORDS TO Uplift

PHOTO: JOSHUA FULLER / UNSPLASH

- **ABUNDANCE [N]:** a large quantity
- **BENEVOLENT [ADJ]:** well-meaning and kind
- **BLISS [N]:** perfect happiness
- **CURIOUS [ADJ.]:** eager to learn
- **EMPATHY [N]:** understanding another's feelings
- **EPIPHANY [N]:** a sudden realisation
- **ENCHANTING [ADJ.]:** delightful and charming
- **FLOURISHING [ADJ.]:** thriving
- **INSOUCIANCE [N]:** without care
- **JUBILANT [ADJ.]:** expressing great happiness
- **LUMINOUS [ADJ.]:** bright and shining
- **POISE [N]:** graceful and elegant
- **QUINTESSENTIAL [ADJ.]:** a perfect or typical example
- **SERENDIPITY [N]:** a pleasant surprise
- **WONDROUS [ADJ.]:** marvellous and wonderful
- **UNFLAPPABLE [ADJ.]:** cool, calm and collected
- **ZEAL [N]:** energy and enthusiasm

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