



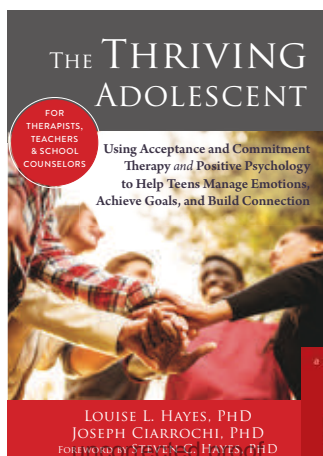
# Thriving adolescents

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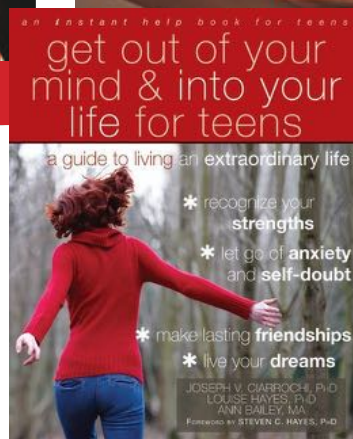
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A unified approach to improving the lives of young people

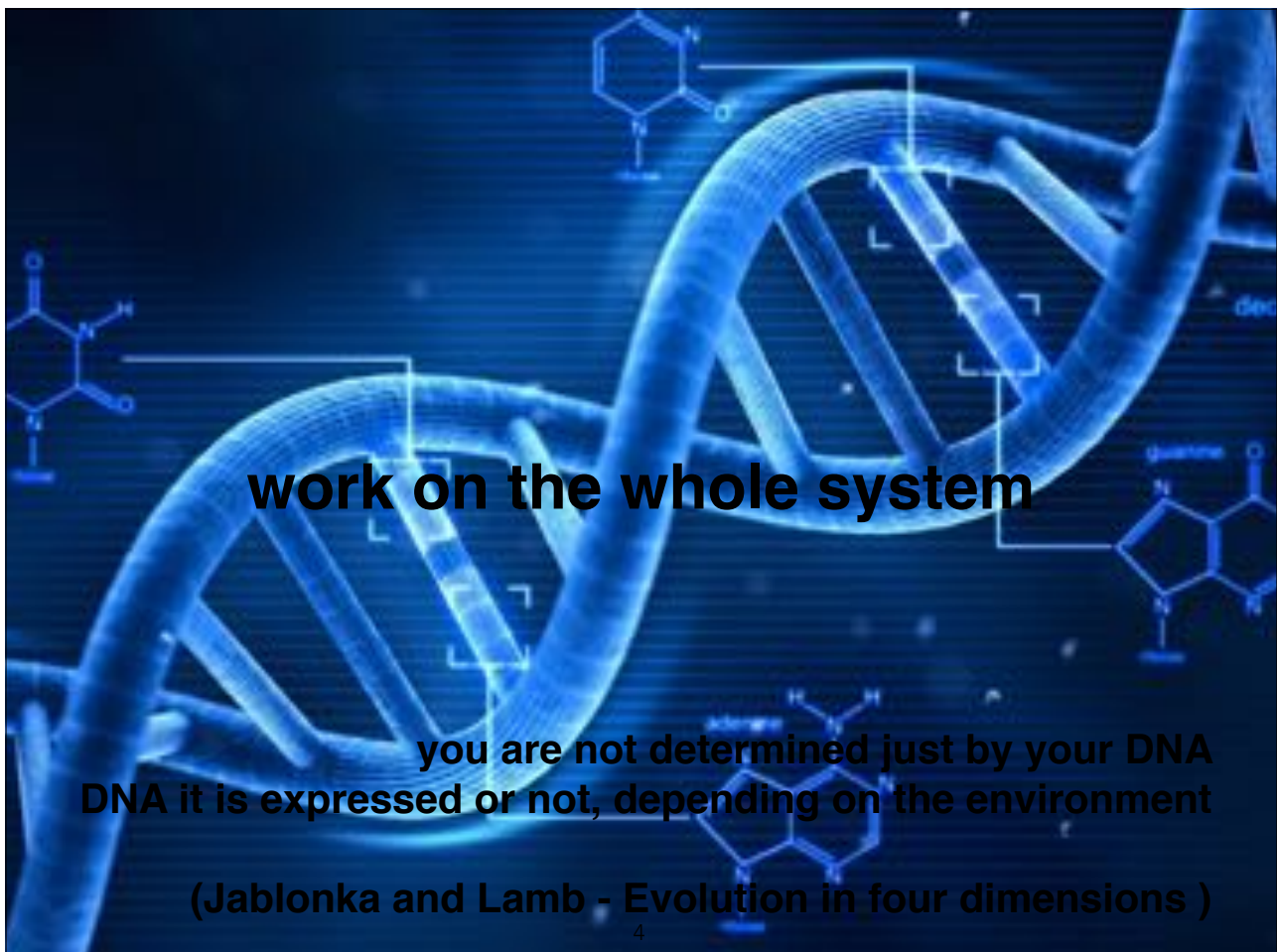


[www.thrivingadolescent.com](http://www.thrivingadolescent.com)





mindful adventures  
-- not for profit, mindfulness for professionals,  
[www.louisehayes.com.au](http://www.louisehayes.com.au)



**work on the whole system**

**you are not determined just by your DNA  
DNA it is expressed or not, depending on the environment**

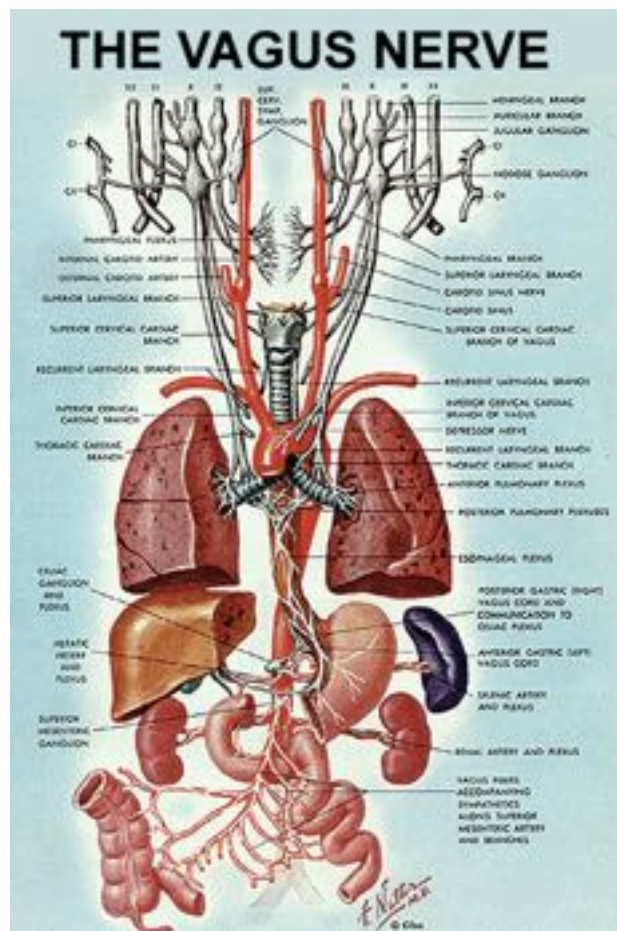
**(Jablonka and Lamb - Evolution in four dimensions )**



**your brain isn't the whole story**



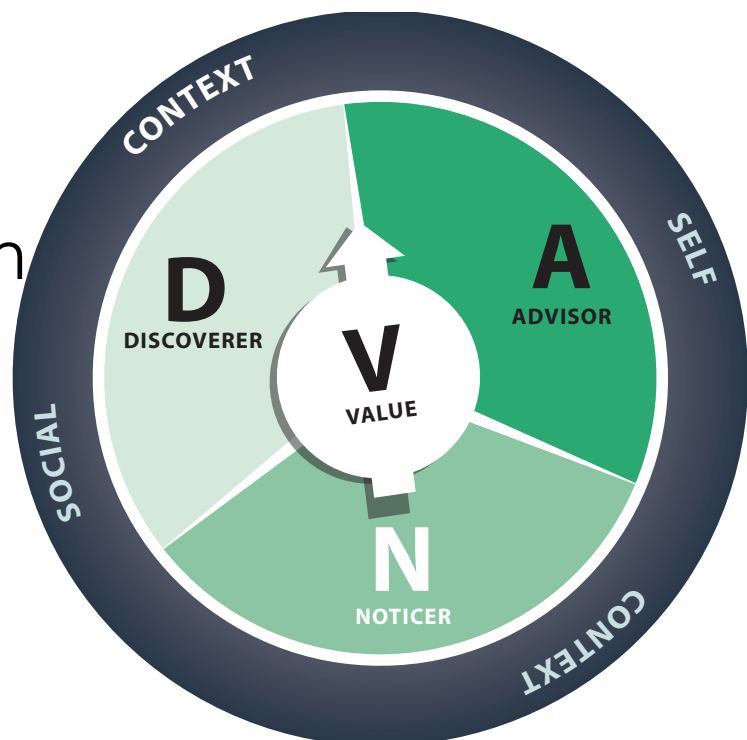
our bodies  
tell us  
about the  
world too



and our bodies and minds  
respond to others



we begin  
with the  
social  
space





**Our whole system includes our social connections  
Being seen and heard matters as much as  
nutrition and education**



Harlow, Harry F., and Robert R. Zimmermann. "Affectional responses in the infant monkey." *Science* (1959).



Young people report the highest rates of loneliness in any age group (Hawkley & Cacioppo, 2010; Heinrich & Gullone, 2006).  
79 percent of those under eighteen reported feeling lonely sometimes or often.

## What does loneliness predict? ....

Heart disease

Obesity

Impaired cognitive performance

Poor sleep quality

Poor immune function

Mental health problems

Poor self-control

....and the list goes on

## **Tip 1**

### **They still need you**

#### **Why**

- Decades of multidisciplinary research in attachment (Bowlby, 1979), psychology (Johnson et al., 2013), animal research (Harlow, 1959), neurodevelopment (Szalavits and Perry, 2010), neuropsychology (Lieberman, 2013), and anthropology (Hrdy, 2009) show that relationships with family and friends are essential to every aspect of our wellbeing.
- Perspective taking of others, builds empathy and compassion (Sahdra et al., 2015a; Ciarrochi et al., 2016)

Support from parents is more strongly associated with well-being and development than support from friends,

Having friends does not adequately compensate for a lack of support from parents

(Helsen et al., 2000)

Adolescence is a time of critical growth in biological, brain, cognitive and social functioning

They need a solid relationship with parents that facilitates communication, and allows exploration but also providing fair rules and boundaries

This does not mean absence of conflict



Dear Parent:

This is the letter that I wish I could write.

This fight we are in right now. I need it. I need this fight. I can't tell you this because I don't have the language for it and it wouldn't make sense anyway. But I need this fight. Badly. I need to hate you right now and I need you to survive it. I need you to survive my hating you and you hating me. I need this fight even though I hate it too. It doesn't matter what this fight is even about: curfew, homework, laundry, my messy room, going out, staying in, leaving, not leaving, boyfriend, girlfriend, no friends, bad friends. It doesn't matter. I need to fight you on it and I need you to fight me back.

<http://www.emotionalgeographic.com/>

continued

I desperately need you to hold the other end of the rope. To hang on tightly....

I used to know who I was, who you were, who we were. But right now I don't. Right now I am looking for my edges and I can sometimes only find them when I am pulling on you.

I need this fight and I need to see that no matter how bad or big my feelings are—they won't destroy you or me.

<http://www.emotionalgeographic.com/>

A strong relationship means being able to express their opinions even while disagreeing,

As parents we need to validate their opinions

Allow their strong feelings, even if we get upset

And show empathy

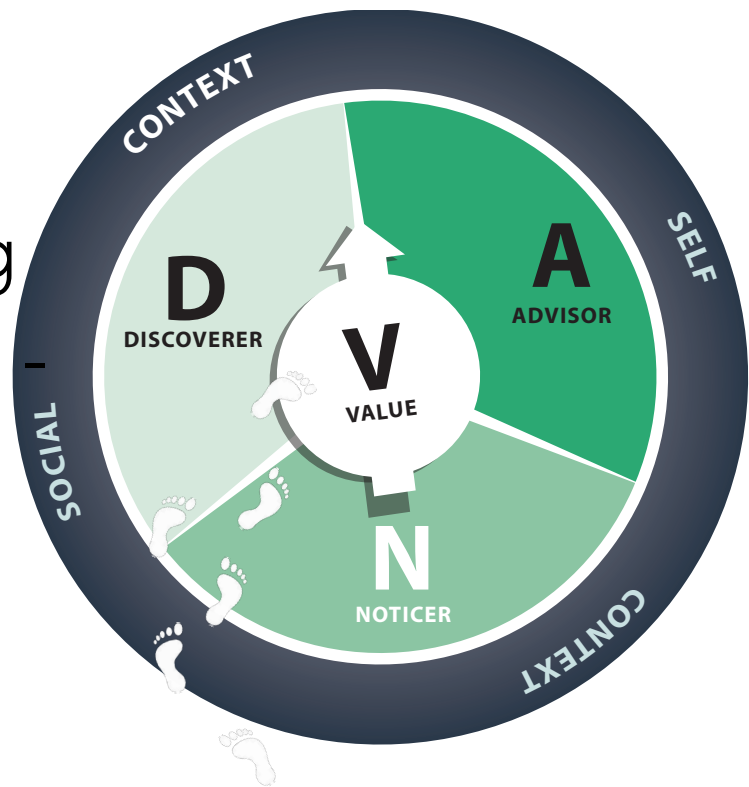
**tip - 2**

**steal back time - be together**

**try fewer questions,  
(sometimes don't even  
make eye contact.)**



stepping  
into the  
value -  
vitality



**tip - 3**

**connect with things that bring  
vitality - six ways**

## **six ways to greater vitality**

for us, and for our kids

## Care for yourself

Self-care includes anything you do to make sure your mind and body are working well.

treating yourself to a fun activity after a hard day at school,

being kind to yourself during tough times,

eating well, and getting enough sleep.

**DONT** put this last on the list!!!





# Connect

being with family, friends,  
mentors, pets



# Give

Giving to others promotes your  
own well-being.

Think of times when you did  
something for someone, such as  
thanking someone, paying  
someone a compliment, or  
helping someone work through a  
problem.

Or maybe you gave someone a  
gift by just listening to or  
accepting that person. Other  
ways of giving include taking care  
of animals or the environment.



# Be active

Going for a walk or run.  
Stepping outside, cycle, play  
a game, dance.

Exercising makes you feel  
good.

physical activity you found  
meaningful.



# Challenge yourself

Think of how you might  
challenge yourself or perhaps  
learn something new.

What are some challenging  
activities that you find enjoy-  
able, meaningful, or  
personally important?



# Notice now

Think of times when you've been a noticer, paying attention with your five senses: touch, taste, sight, sound, and smell.

Nature, experiences, the world inside and outside

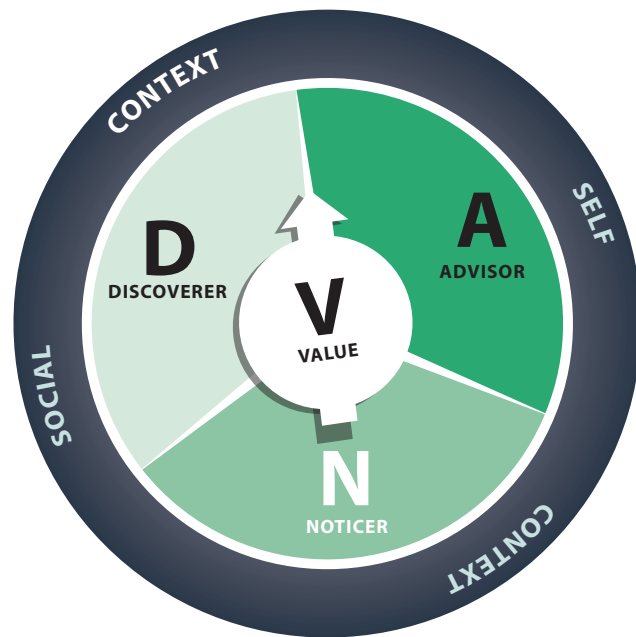
or, fully engaged with a friend



## tip - 3

**connect with things that bring  
vitality - six ways**

step to  
the  
noticer...



tip 4-

nutrition  
sleep  
exercise

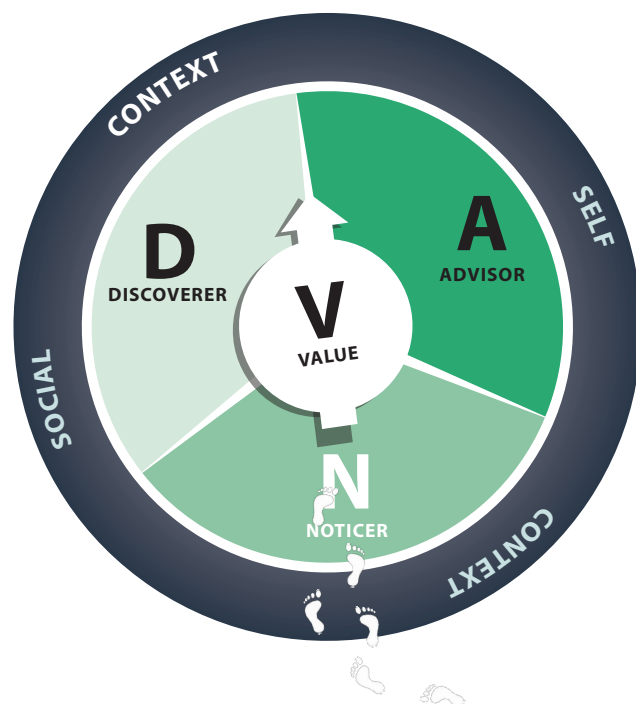




40% of teens sleep fewer than 6 hours a night;  
less than 25% sleep eight hours, and only 7.6% sleep the  
recommended 9-10 hours a night.

Teens need 9-10 hours a day  
body clock is delayed, releasing melatonin about  
90 minutes later at the onset of puberty

Make sleep a priority  
Remember you are the parent  
Body clock, same daily sleep and wake times  
Set a 9-10 hour sleep goal  
Screen time, power down at sundown – 1  
hour prior to bedtime  
Bedroom, quiet and dark like a cave  
Meals, avoid heavy foods late in the day  
No sugar or caffeine late in the day



**tip - 5**  
**feelings will pass**

**notice feelings,**  
**allow them, respond only when needed**

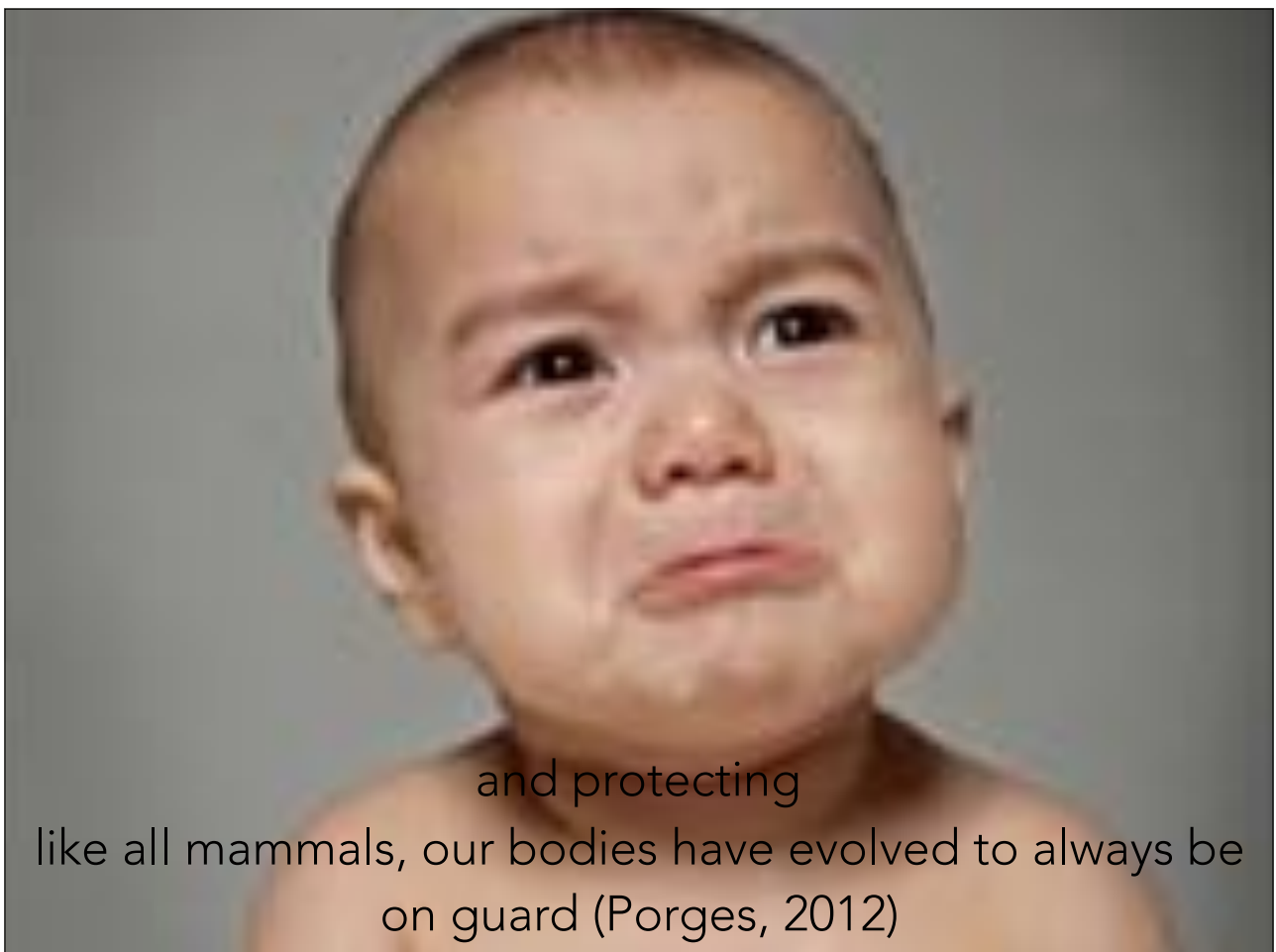


noticer is for connecting with others



and connecting  
with the world

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and protecting  
like all mammals, our bodies have evolved to always be  
on guard (Porges, 2012)





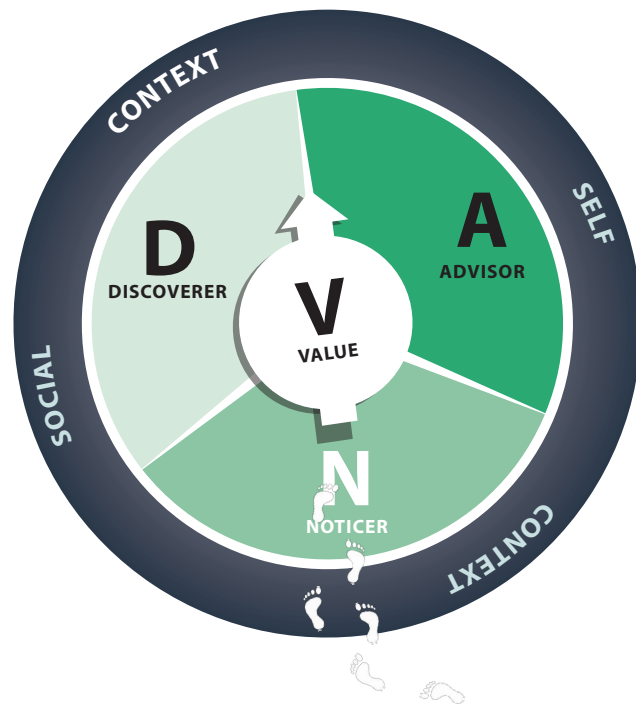
We get messages that our feelings are not 'ok' to have.  
Lessons to stop them, replace them, control them,  
distract from them, even 'eat them'

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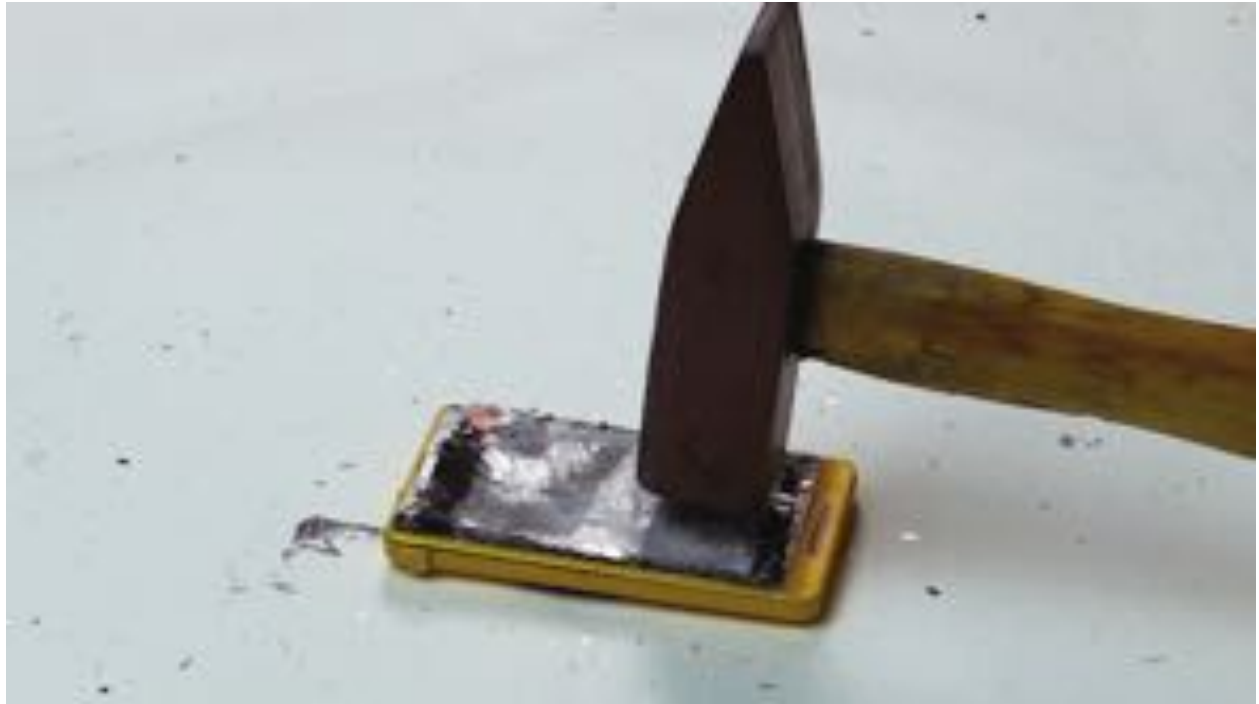
we even feel many things all at once -  
especially teenagers

3 noticer  
skills



you have a message





too extreme perhaps?

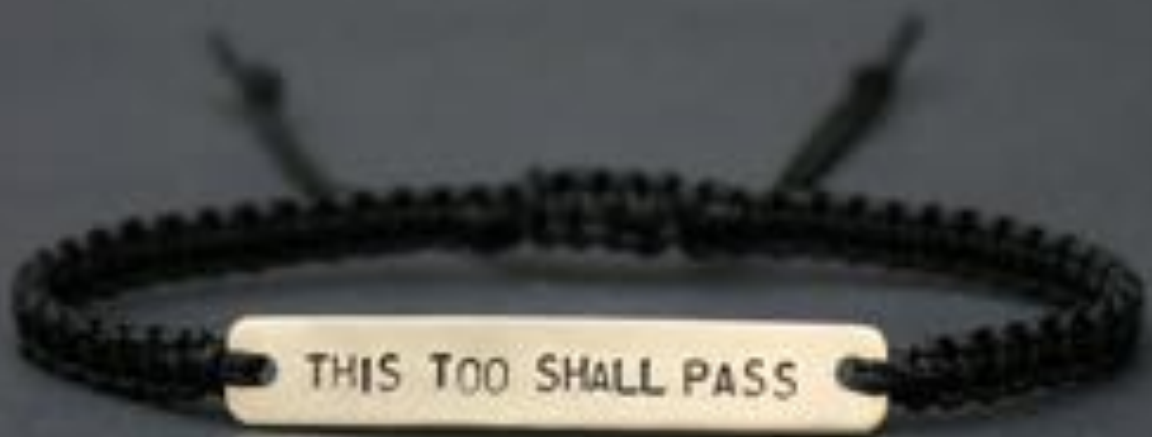




**not if you have a body**







feelings last on average a very short time

**tip - 5**  
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# A way for parents to model this

Pause

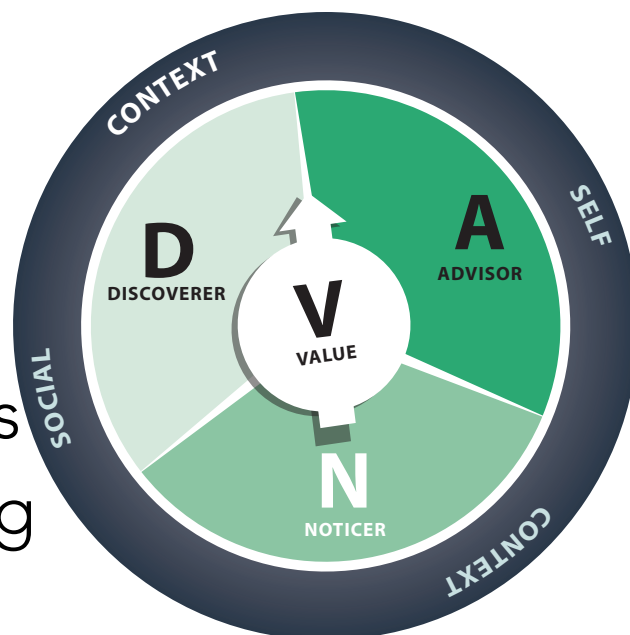
Take 2 breaths

Teach new rules for feelings

Feelings just are, or

All feelings are ok but some behaviours are not ok

our  
physical  
context  
  
influences  
everything







Mindfulness and acceptance  
can help us

- what for???
- for me?
- for we?





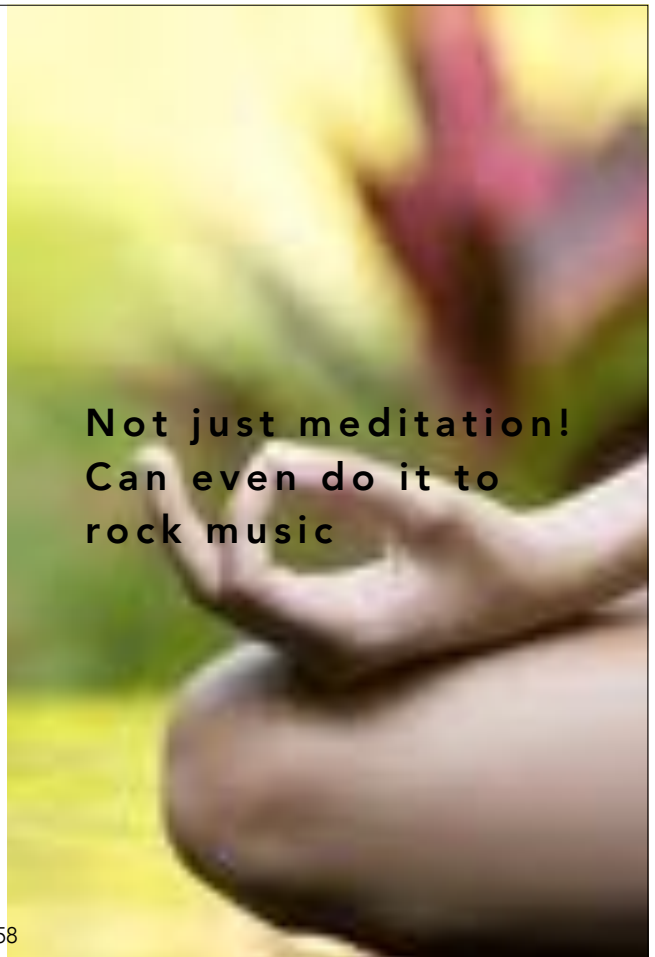
## it isn't just about feelings

- becoming aware of your engine running
- our physiology can be altered
- through moving, breathing, mindfulness, etc
- but also being seen, and loved by others



## Mindfulness list

- A-N-D
- Breathing (Balloon Breathing, Hand rising and falling)
- Eating
- Walking
- Listening to sounds
- Stretching
- Moving
- Exercise
- Yoga
- Observing the outside world
- Listening to music
- Playing
- Having a conversation





## Mindfulness apps

- Smiling mind
- Headspace
- Insight timer
- Buddhify 2



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tip - 6

breathing space  
3min

- A final word on mindfulness

- 1. pause
- 2. be here

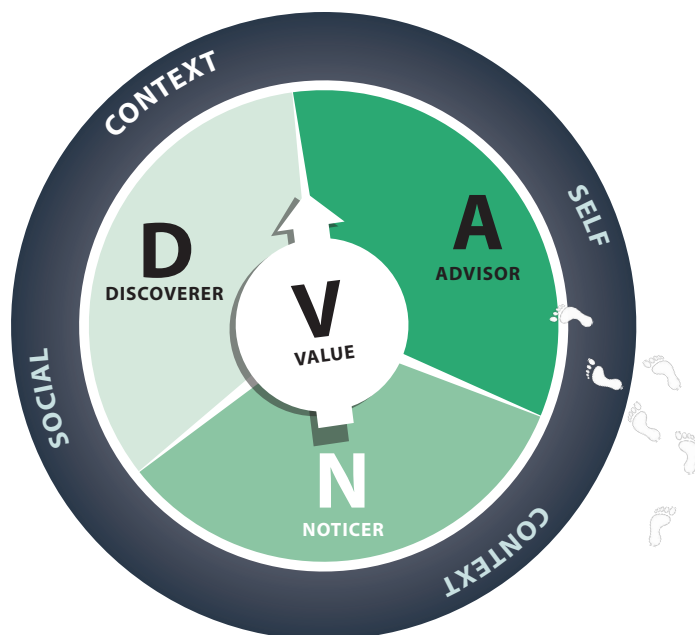
- we need a what for....

- to be here
- to be together

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stepping  
into the  
the  
advisor  
space



advisor is a human  
superpower



but it is NOT the experience



the mind's job is to keep you alive



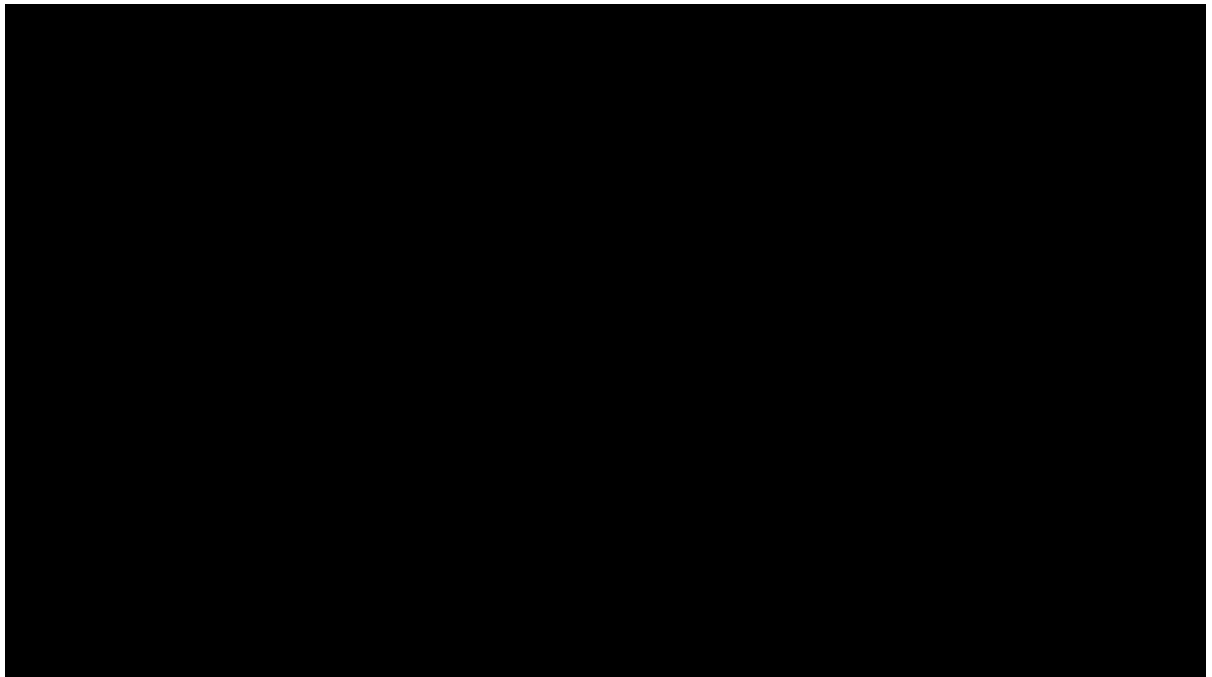
and connected with others



our job - is to listen, and  
not be afraid of negative  
thoughts

give your advisor microphone

but is it just teens who  
have thoughts like this?





human mind is designed to be  
negative, to look for danger

in the teen years, there is a lot of  
uncertainty, it can feel more dangerous

tip 7

negative  
thoughts are a  
time to listen,  
when it's tough  
give compassion



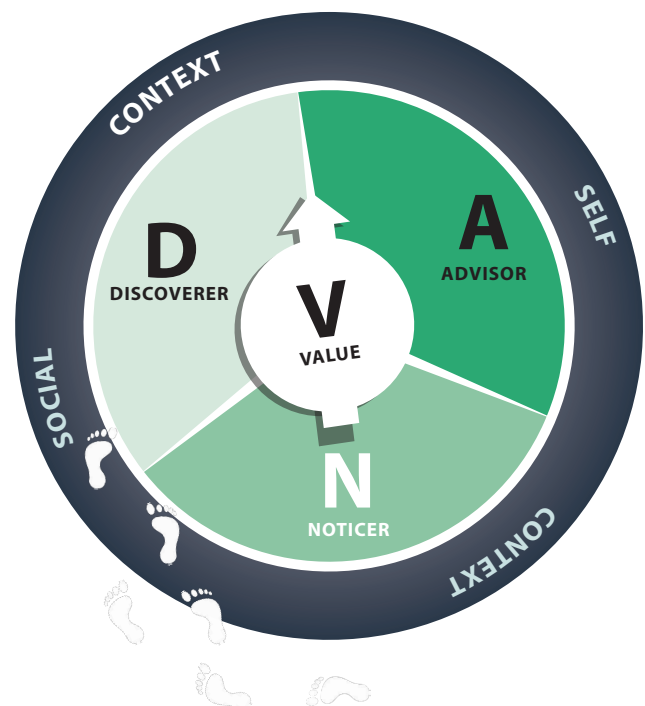
**tip - 8**

**it's ok to make rules and ask that they be followed**

**rules need a foundation to rest on - relationship first**

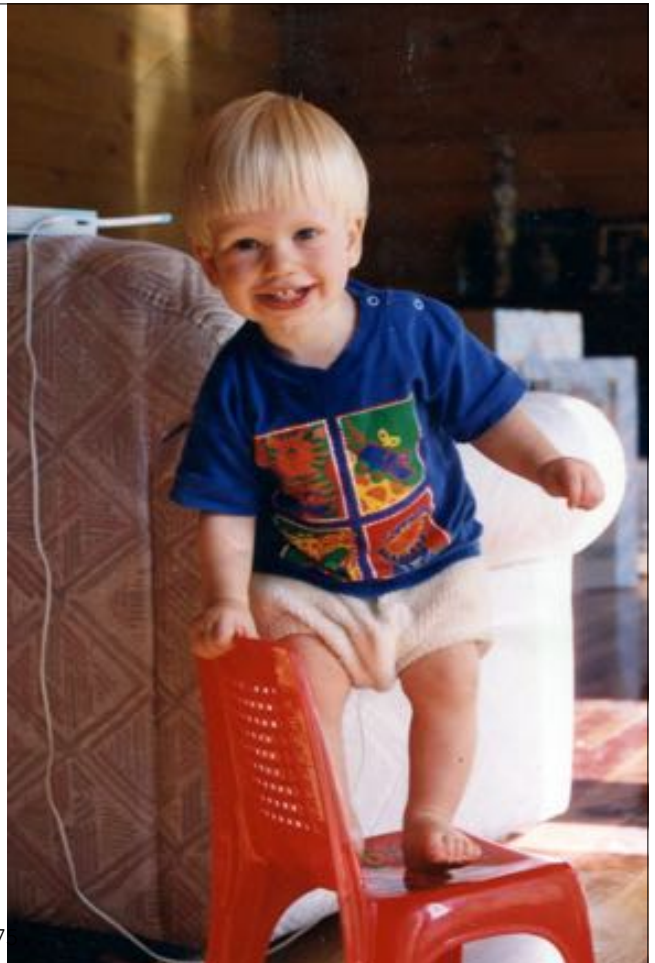
**you are the parent - rules for electronic devices,  
bedtime, etc are needed.**

stepping  
into the  
the  
discoverer  
space



# We discover

- the world can be moved
- manipulated
- changed



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## what is adolescence for?

## animal studies on adolescence

- Animal adolescence - risk taking, love of novelty, sensation seeking, and changes in peer and family relationship (Spear, 2004, Laviola, Macrì, Morley-Fletcher, & Walter, 2003)

## anthropological studies on adolescence

- Human adolescence seen across 187 countries - risk taking, love of novelty, sensation seeking, and changes in peer and family relationship - (Schlegel & Barry, 1991)

risk taking, love of novelty and  
sensations

evolved in adolescence for learning  
to be independent - for survival

discoverer is the step for this





maladaptive risk

adaptive risk





track the experience

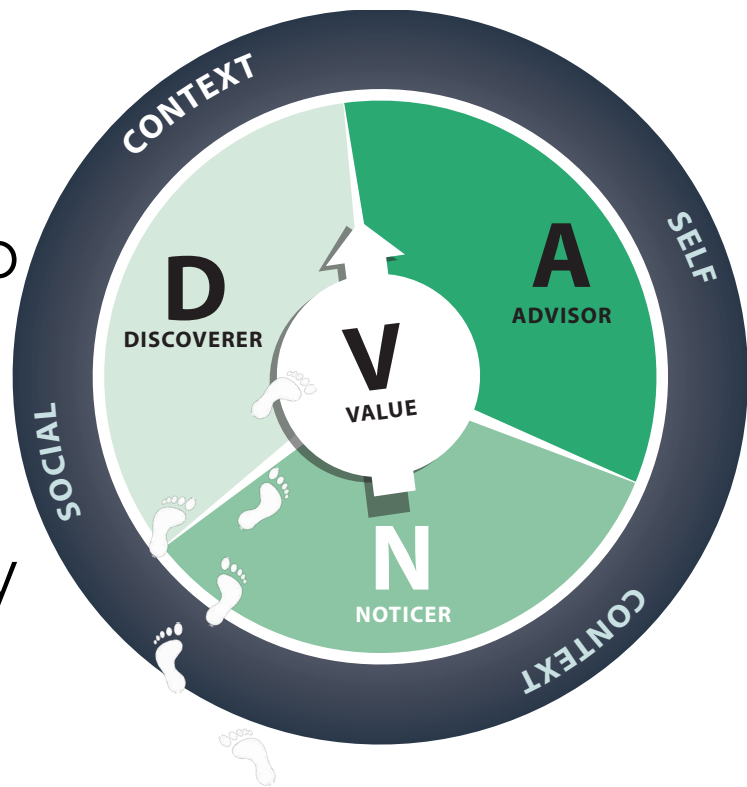


not your advisor

**tip - 9**

**discover how to take (adaptive) risks,  
test,  
try,  
fail  
and try again**

return to  
value -  
vitality  
each day



**tip - 10**

**return to value each day  
especially with each other**



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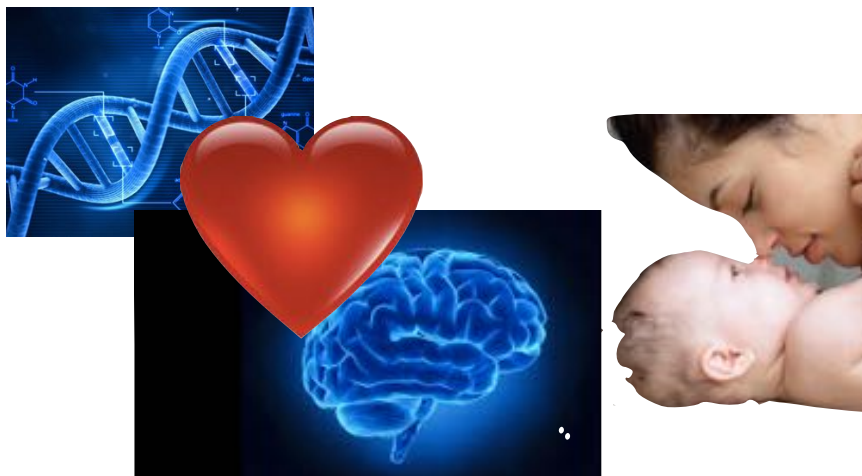
or, fully engaged with a friend



# Challenge yourself

Think of how you might challenge yourself or perhaps learn something new.

What are some challenging activities that you find enjoyable, meaningful, or personally important?



....work on the whole system  
individual and others



tip 1

They still need you

tip - 2

steal back time - be together

try fewer questions, (sometimes don't even make eye contact.)

tip - 3

connect with things that bring vitality - six ways

tip - 4

sleep, nutrition, exercise

tip - 5

feelings will pass

notice feelings,

allow them, react only when needed

tip - 6

breathe

tip 7

negative thoughts are a time to listen,  
when it's tough, give compassion

tip - 8

it's ok to make rules and ask that they be followed.

rules need a foundation to rest on - relationship first

you are the parent - rules for electronic devices, bedtime, etc are needed.

tip 8

discover how to take (adaptive) risks, test, try, fail and try again

tip - 10

return to value each day, especially with each other

follow up

summary will be sent to school  
[www.thrivingadolescent.com](http://www.thrivingadolescent.com)



thank you

