



PESA

Positive Education Schools Association

Community of Practice

Have you joined your local state or territory discussion group yet? Go to www.pesa.edu.au/discussion-groups/ to join!

Each week we post a 'conversation starter' question to encourage the sharing of ideas, approaches and strategies.

In July, our four topics were:

- Mindfulness
- Playing to strengths
- Positivity
- Positive Relationships

Below is a collation of responses across all State Chapter Facebook pages.

Special mention of Nicole Glisson (Tasmania) for contributing to a number of these weekly topics. Thank you to all contributing members for sharing their fantastic ideas and practices.

We hope to hear from many more of you next month!

Week 1 – Being mindful is to be in the present moment.

What have you done – or what have you encouraged your students to do – to practice mindfulness this week? How will you keep this up?

- I'm reading an awesome book called "The Resilience Project", I highly recommend. In the book they suggest that when you're enjoying a moment (a sunset, a good coffee, a beautiful meal) that you say, "Dis" - or "This" to be mindful and show gratitude for a joyous moment! It's been working really well both personally and professionally!!! (Sarah Johnson – QLD) > Hi Sarah, I read this book recently - it is brilliant! I love the GEM principles of Gratitude, Empathy and of course, Mindfulness. Totally agree with you about the importance of these practices in both our personal and professional lives (Matt Smith – QLD)
- In term 2 our Heads of Year implemented a #dismoment challenge (nb. Don't use #dis as not appropriate) it was great to really zero in on GEM. Personally, I use some brain breaks or mindful moments including breathing. (Carolyn Mavin – QLD)



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Week 2 - Have your students and peers done the VIA Character Strength Survey? If so, how do you encourage them to 'play to their strengths'? What is your top signature strength and how have you played to that strength this week?

- I do the youth survey with my Year 6 students. We start the year by identifying them and displaying them in the classroom. Throughout the year we not only refer to them but we actively use them in goal setting. (Lynda Humphries – NSW)
- I run a strengths workshop every Wednesday morning as part of our wellbeing program. We look at our strengths and how we can use them relationships and how they can become our super powers. My top strengths is Hope, this week the goal is to use my strength to instil a positive approach to trial prep for my Yr 12 girls and to create a positive environment at home for my family. (Carolyn Heinz - NSW)
- We generally get our students to do their VIA strengths survey every second year. We talk a lot about how we use our strengths and how we can develop different strengths. I also like to work with staff to help build their wellbeing literacy especially around their strengths vocabulary. We use VIA and Strengths Finder. I did a great unit of my MAPP with Robert Biwas -Diener where he was empowering us to create and develop strengths language outside of VIA. It was a wonderfully creative task and provided loads of interesting discussion following. So much opportunity for great work in this space! (Nicole Glisson – Tas)
- Yes! We've looked at our strengths individually and then as a class by doing a data activity. Students have really benefitted visually observing others strengths and focus areas. (Alex Acworth – ACT)



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Week 3 – We know emotions are contagious. How has your experience of a positive emotion uplifted another person in your life?

- I love sharing this clip to show how emotions are contagious. Try watching Federer and Nadal promoting their charity match without laughing. You will be experiencing positive emotion within seconds!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=94xyOpETYYs> (Matt Smith - QLD)

- I think the simple things are often the most effective. Sharing photos or videos of things that bring you joy or wonder or awe or excitement etc. Having authentic conversations, sending texts, letters, messages with something that has uplifted me with someone else. (Nicole Glisson – TAS)

Week 4 – Thursday 30 July is International Day of Friendship. What are you and your school doing this week to invest in and build positive relationships?

- On International Day of Friendship this Thursday our Head of Year Team is launching a (Late) Breakfast Club for staff at morning tea. This will be an opportunity for new and existing staff to gather together and build more positive relationships and friendships. These weekly occasions will be a reminder that “happiness is great food and great company” (Matt Smith – QLD)

- Since COVID hit, I have set up a fortnightly Zoom call with two friends in London and Sydney. We all love the more regular contact. We feel closer than ever and often comment we should have done this years ago! (Marita H-B - VIC)



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For more resources on each of these topics, please visit the
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