Ginger the Frog Research

This program supports children to learn to regulate their emotions, dissolve stress in their body and cultivate empathy, creativity and positivity. We achieve this through our use of four pillars.

The Four Pillars of the Ginger the Frog Wellness Program

- Somatic Self Care
- Positive Psychology
- Awareness
- Neuroplasticity

We address these four pillars through story, music, song, movement and breathing exercises.

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Pillar 1
Somatic Self Care

Somatic Self Care involves using movement, touch and bodily awareness to help us to reconnect with and heal our body and calm the nervous system.

Stress, a lack of focus and the reduced ability to learn comes from an adaptive response to stress affecting the physiology of the brain. This physiological response can be healed with physical exercises.

Recognising where we are holding stress in our body and using specific exercises to support us to dissolve that stress, reconnects the body with the mind and opens the doorway to our feelings. When we can feel an emotion, we can then use physiological exercises , mindfulness and creative visualisations to help change the emotions.

The Ginger the Frog Wellness Program has embedded somatic exercises within each of the nine stories. The children learn these exercises with Ginger and can observe the way in which they help Ginger to gain healthier insights and to solve her challenges.

Pillar 2
Awareness

Awareness of how we feel in our mind and body connects us as human beings. It is the basis of empathy and empathy influences how we care for each other and our environment.

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Awareness of our thoughts and feelings requires continual practice. Using mindfulness exercises and ensuring that they become a familiar part of every day life, helps us practice being in the present moment, unencumbered by our worries from the past and our fears about the future. We create space to observe the mind, without being lost in our incessant thoughts. If we can learn to notice our emotions, without judgement, then we can make healthy choices about the emotions we keep and those we let go.

This is the single most important practice to teach our young children and it is easier to create as a habit when young, because children's brainwaves are slower.

The Ginger the Frog Wellness Program uses story to cultivate empathy. As the children read the stories and become aware of how each story makes them feel, they are able to connect with Ginger and her experiences with a deeper level of understanding. They want to help Ginger feel better and to have a positive outcome. Helping Ginger, through story, imagination and creativity helps themselves.

Pillar 3
Positive Psychology

Martin Selligman is the founder of modern day Positive Psychology (https://www.authentichappiness.sas.upenn.edu/home). He states that optimism can be a learned behaviour and needs to be a priority for children in order to build resilience, encourage positive mental health and extend health and wellbeing.

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In Positive Psychology instead of trying to 'fix' the problem, the focus is on how to cultivate and enhance human strengths. Some character strengths of optimistic people include social intelligence, perseverance, integrity, kindness, an appreciation of beauty and gratitude.

"The aim of Positive Psychology is to catalyse a change in psychology from a preoccupation only with repairing the worst things in life, to also building the best qualities in life" Martin Seligman

A positive mindset is much easier to achieve when a child feels safe and worthy.

In Ginger the Frog, Great Auntie Fifi is a wise and positive influence in Gingers life. She supports Ginger to navigate life with examples of positive self-talk, empathy, encouragement for effort, positive memory recall and through offering a healthy perspective on any challenge that Ginger faces. The songs and visualisations on the album use concepts and language to support the children to form a positive mindset.

Pillar 4
Neuroplasticity

Put simply neuroplasticity is the brain's ability to change, rewire, re learn and strengthen important connections. It is the most active during the first five years of life. Because of this, young children can quickly unlearn negative habits and routines and replace them with more positive ones (National Scientific Council on the Developing Child, 2014)

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Through practice and repetition, we can harness the neuroplasticity of the brain to create and reinforce new neural pathways and learn new skills, habits and ways of thinking and being in the world.

The groundbreaking work of Dr Bruce S. McEwen, Ph.D established what is now known as neuroplasticity. This presentation is titled Brain plasticity. What it is and why it is important https://youtu.be/nkZTJkY1REY

Hypnosis places the brainwaves in the optimum state for neuroplasticity to occur. Hypnosis uses positive suggestion and imagination through creative visualisation. It creates new synaptic connections within the brain and is easy for young children to do.

Accompanying every story is a creative visualisation recording that uses positive suggestions to reinforce the wellness topic in the story. The Ginger the Frog Wellness Program also offers eight creative visualisations on the album, Inside a Star.

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The pioneers of wellness.

There are many people who have pioneered the use of somatic self care, awareness, positive psychology and neuroplasticity in healing the body and mind. We can take charge of our own healing journey because we have the power to heal our bodies and create the reality we want. This is the gift we can give to our children. Every illness and adversity, whether environmental disasters or disease, can offer great insights and learnings.

The right side of our brain is greatly under-utilised and underdeveloped. This side of our brain holds the key to flow states where we're unencumbered with the obstacles of critical thinking and self doubt, and we're lost in the joy of our human experience with a passion for life. This is where we deeply understand that we are all connected, which creates a desire to work together for the good of the whole, rather than as seperate individuals, only pursuing personal gain. It has been fascinating to observe how we easily loose our way when disaster strikes and undervalue and distrust the body's natural and intrinsic intelligence.

This is because we've lost touch with ourselves and we don't feel safe. Is this what we want to pass on to the next generation?

When a crisis occurs, whether it be a pandemic or environmental it seems that only the few who have done the work, are in tune with their inner terrain, having had their own experiences of healing and creating their reality understand that a positive mindset, calming the nervous system, good nutrition and inner reflection aid a speedy recovery of mind and body.

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Back in 1984 Louise Hay wrote a book called 'You can heal your life'. This book was about how the mind affects the body. Louise realised how to use the power of the mind and good nutrition to heal the body when she was diagnosed with cancer . She considered the alternatives to surgery and drugs, and instead developed an intensive program of affirmations, visualization, nutritional cleansing, and psychotherapy. Within six months, she was completely healed. Isn't this a great philosophy to teach our children? They have the power to heal themselves.

Martin Selligman is the father of positive psychology in the academic world. he focusses on optimism and working on a positive mindset along with practitioners specialising in hypnosis eg Marissa Peer, spiritual teachers eg Michael Singer, Ram Das, Sadhguru and Paramhansa Yogananda and the great philosophers of our time such as Eckhart Tolle.

In 1986 Dr Joe Dispenza broke his back in multiple places and was told by four different surgeons that he needed a rod put in his spine and would never walk again. He decided to try healing with the power of his mind and succeeded. He has now spent the rest of his life travelling the world, teaching others to do the same and describes his findings in books such as 'Be Your Own Placebo', 'Breaking the Habit of Being Yoursel'f and 'Becoming Supernatural'.

Peter Levine wrote a book called'Waking the Tiger' in 1997 about how to heal trauma with somatic exercises mainly shaking. He explains that animals easily shake off a traumatic event but humans tend to store the energy of trauma in their bodies which creates psychological as well as physical illness.

Bessel Van der Kolk wrote "The Body keeps the score" in 2014 and he describes how the brain, mind and body together heal trauma. He says that trauma is specifically an event that overwhelms the central nervous system, altering the way we process and recall memories. "Trauma is not the story of something that happened back then," he adds. "It's the current imprint of that pain, horror, and fear living inside people."

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Dr James Gordon a trauma expert for over fifty years and CEO of The Centre of Mind Body Medicine describes in his book Transforming Trauma how everyone has experienced some form of trauma in their lives and the most powerful healing modalities he has used are shaking and dancing, along with mindfulness, yoga, meditation, theraputic drawing and journaling which creates optimism and a desire and ability to heal ourselves.

Albert Einstein stated “The field is the sole governing agency of the particle” This revelation is huge if we apply it consciously to our life…it means the invisible field of energy, that is within us and all around us, is what creates and sustains matter. We can learn to tap into the field and therefore create our own reality. The constant need for scientific proof with no regard to right brain intuition is stunting our growth as a human race.

Dr David Hawkins in his book Letting Go - A pathway to surrender describes how he healed 76 illnesses by changing his attitude. He says we can wrap our illnesses in fancy jargon but ultimately it’s a process of letting go of our past wounds and out dated thought forms and the body and mind will heal itself.

Since 1991, the HeartMath Institute has developed reliable, scientifically validated tools that help people reduce and avoid stress while experiencing increased peace, satisfaction and self-security. Their research has shown the enormous benefits to mankind both psychologically and physically using heart centred awareness which creates heart coherence. Their studies have discovered that the energy of the heart is way more powerful and has more influence than the brain.

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Michael Singer wrote The Untethered Soul and the Surrender Experiment. He writes in a no frills, no fuss way about how our mind works from his spiritual background. He created a huge life, unwittingly, understanding that our greatest learnings and pathway to peace comes from saying yes to life and getting amongst it. If we are to heal this planet and move forward there needs to be responsible adults who know their minds and can get on with each other and ultimately be more independent.

There are thousands of authors who write about, have had, and helped facilitate what we call miraculous healings and have found that what we are capable of achieving is unfathomable. Our world is progressing very fast, at present we rely on the influence of our limited left brain which believes in lack and separation creating an unquenchable thirst for money, recognition and a general belief that there's not enough and we don't have the ability to heal ourselves. Thank goodness for the pioneers, who have faced ridicule, who have devoted their lives to sharing their findings about the mind and body connection and its ability to heal from adversity and problem solve in a world that's in trouble. Wouldn't it be wonderful if the left analytical academic brains and the right intuitive brains could work together? This, I believe, is worth teaching to our children.

It is time to acknowledge that our children are powerful creators with the most incredible self regulating bodies and we can nurture their gifts in a non competitive environment, teaching the importance of empathy and creativity through somatic self care, a positive mindset, the vital importance of self awareness and using neuroplasticity to keep on track.

This, I believe, is worth passing on to our young children.

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Our Recommended Reading List

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Berceli, David. The Revolutionary Trauma Release process : Namaste, 2008

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Dass, Ram. Becoming Nobody : Sounds True, 2019

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Holden, Robert. Loveability : Hay House, 2013

Hypnosis - A comprehensive Guide

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Katie, Byron. Loving what is. Four questions that can change your life : Harmony, 2003

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Silva, Jose. The Silva Method : Pocket Books, 1991

Singer, Michael. The Surrender Experiment : Harmony, 2015

Singer, Micheal. The Unthethered Soul : New Harbinger Publications, 2007

Stroud, Gabbie. Teacher : Allen and Unwin, 2018

The Healing Power of Mindfulness - Jon Kabat-Zinn : Hachette Books, 2018

Thorpe, Scott. How to Think Like Eistein : Source Books, 2000

Tipping, Colin. Radical Forgiveness : Quest Publishing. 2002

Tolle, Ekhart. A New Earth : Plume, 2006

Tsabuary, Shefali. The conscious parent : Namaste Publishing, 2010

Williamson, Marianne. A Return to Love : Harper One, 1996

Yogi, Maharishi Mahesh. Science of being and art of living :Transcendental Meditation : Plume, 2001

Zukav, Gary. The seat of the soul : Simon and Schuster, 2012

Our recommended watching list

No such thing as naughty- Why we need to rethink challenging behaviour. Peter Nelmes

Rethinking Challenging Kids - J.Stewart Ablon

My Stroke of Insight - Jill Bolte Taylor

How to raise emotionally intelligent Children - Lael Stone

Presence , parenting and the Planet - Dr Dan Siegal

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Scientific Studies

Breathing

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