



The essential
'battle plan'
for your
life ahead

YOU'VE GOT
WHAT IT TAKES

A FOUR STEP MENTORING TOOL KIT FROM



FOR AGES 11 - 18



TIP FOR MENTORS

Don't panic!
You do not require previous mentoring experience to work through this course with a student. It's all self explanatory.

TIP FOR MENTORS

Although the course is written for pupils, where possible, try to do the exercises too!

TIP FOR MENTORS

Look for the 'read aloud' symbols next to the explanatory text. Read this text aloud to the pupil at the beginning of each section.



Let's begin...

Do you sometimes get told: "everything is possible; the world is full of opportunity; you can be everything you want to be...?" Do you sometimes disagree? You may look around at others who seem to be better than you are, are able to do more, have more, know what they want to do with their lives; you may feel small, inadequate, in some way not enough.

By working through this four step course you will begin the process of discovering more about who you really are. By talking through many aspects of your life you will uncover your best qualities and begin the process of defining yourself by what you can do and not by what you can't. You should finish the course fully equipped with a number of tools to help you to get the most out of your life and from yourself.

The plan!

This four step course should be worked through together by two people - you (the student) and your **'Mentor'**. A mentor can be any adult who will play the role of your teacher and guide. They do not have to have mentoring experience since this course should be self explanatory and hand hold you both through the process. Together you will work through each step looking at **'what'** is to be discussed, **'why'** it's being discussed and **'how'** to tackle a simple exercise associated with it.



Step One

Part 1 • Your Contract

To be read and signed by both you and your mentor. It outlines how the 4 sessions will work with rules such as timings and locations and most importantly how to keep everything confidential.

Part 2 • Building a relationship

This is where you'll both begin to tell your own stories, being as open as you can, in order to build a strong bond of trust.

Step Two

Part 1 • Understanding my skills and strengths

What are you good at – maybe without even recognising it? What are your natural skills and abilities?

Part 2 • Understanding my achievements

What have you achieved in your life? Are there things you've done that you didn't think you could do? Have you got up again after failing?

Step Three

Part 1 • Understanding my qualities

You will begin to understand the qualities and values you have after reflecting on your achievements, strengths and skills.

Part 2 • Understanding my setbacks

What have been some of the tougher points in your life so far? By discussing these we can begin to learn from them.

Step Four

Part 1 • What are dreams and goals?

What's the difference between a dream and a goal and what tools do you need to start realising them?

Part 2 • Understanding what is holding you back

Many people fail to realise their potential because they allow so many things - belief, resources, people etc - to hold them back.





Step One

Your Contract

Let's start by drawing up a contract between yourself and your mentor so that you can both fully understand how this process will work and what your 'rules' are for working together.

Part 1 Your Contract



Contract

Name of Student: _____

Name of Mentor: _____

Dates of the 4 meetings (these do not all need to be completed at the start of this process):

Step 1 date: _____

Step 2 date: _____

Step 3 date: _____

Step 4 date: _____

Meeting Place – a place to be agreed on by both (across a desk is to be avoided if possible!)
We suggest a bench, a sofa, a café, common room, study. You must both feel safe.

Mentor will always bring the following... (eg snacks, drinks, surprises etc)

Any additional rules (you may wish to discuss confidentiality here):

We both agree to following these steps during each session:

1. Begin each step with one person reading out loud to the other from the session notes.
2. Discuss the exercise together.
3. The student should complete the exercise but with the mentor giving some of their own examples too.
4. During a session, notes should be made of outcomes and actions.

Signed by Mentor _____ **Date** _____

Signed by Student _____ **Date** _____



Part 2

Building Relationships

Building Relationships

Now the contract is drawn up, let's get to work. This process is not supposed to be intimidating or stressful, instead it should prove to be a relaxed and rewarding process in which you begin to think in a reflective way about yourself. In doing so, you should gain a better understanding of what's important to you and, the most vital part, what can make you happy. In this step we'll reflect on some highlights and lowlights of life so far.

Why?

This process of thinking about highs and lows, successes and failures helps us to realise that all of us, as human beings will experience ups and downs in life. It is a good tool for you and your mentor to get to know each other.

How?

Use this rollercoaster to describe your life until now, a few examples are provided. It should simply reflect some of your best times and some of your lowest. Positive events are as the track goes upwards, and negative events are as the track descends. The higher the track, the better the moment was. Obviously the younger you are the fewer events you can list but they should be included, however small. It's important to try to be as open as you can in this process to get as much value as possible from it.

EG: New puppy

EG: I was dropped from a sports team

EG: My 12th birthday party

BEST
MOMENT

LOWEST
MOMENT

Step Two

Part 1 Skills and Strengths

Skills and Strengths

Could you list your strengths? Many people struggle. However if we can begin to understand our strengths and ensure that we use them whenever possible, we are more likely to flourish and be happy. Focusing on our weaknesses while ignoring our strengths can be a source of discouragement and failure, but using our strengths, put simply, makes us feel good.

Let's define 'strengths & skills'

What is the difference between a strength and a skill? We'll use these simple definitions:

Skill:

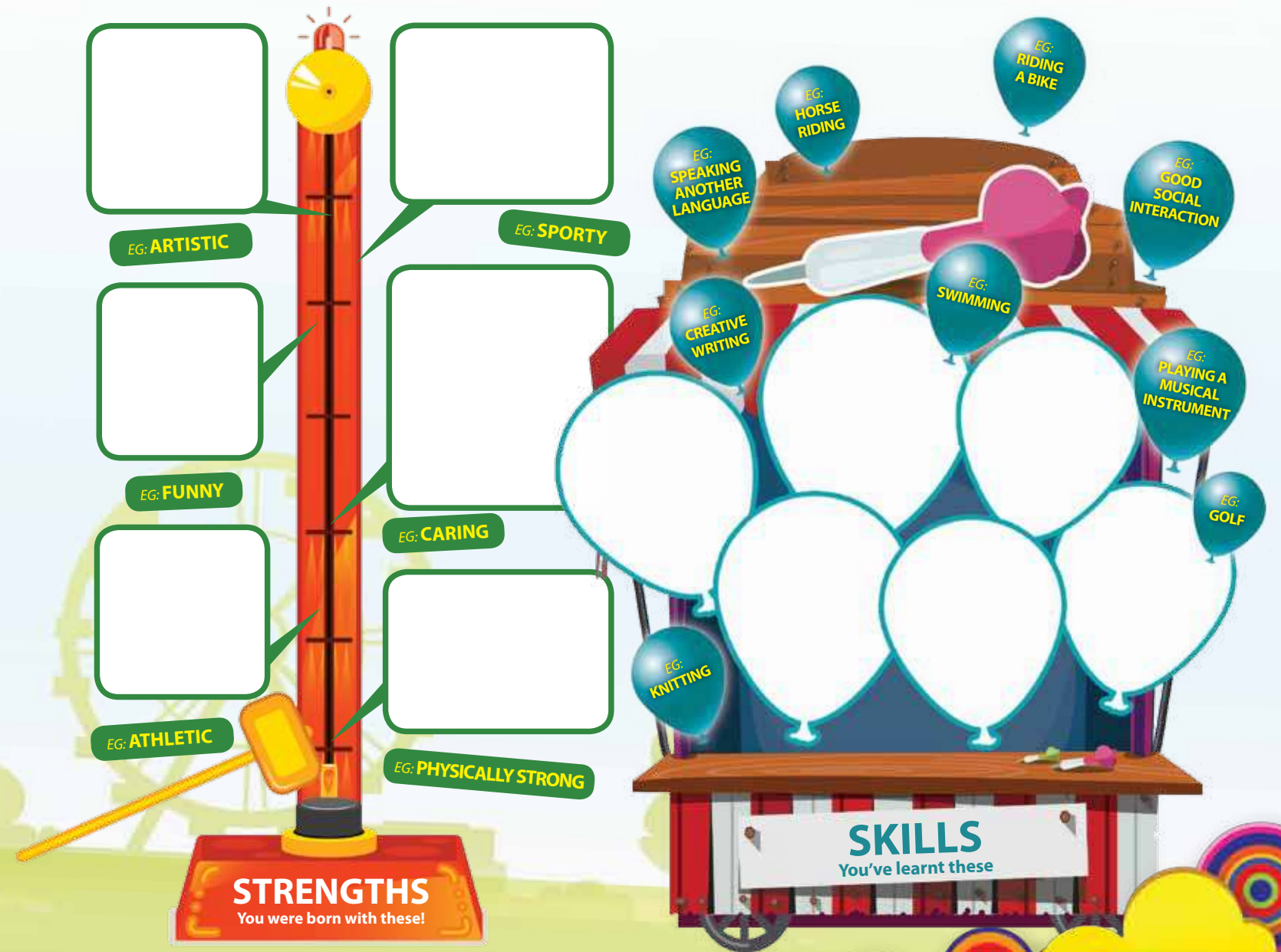
Something you learn how to do through practice, eg swimming, speaking another language, playing football.

Strength:

Something we are naturally good at, we were born with and didn't have to learn, eg being sporty, flexible, intelligent, musical.

Often people think certain skills can't be learnt and assume: "I wasn't born with it, therefore I can't be good at it." Some great examples of skills such as these are: self-confidence (yes this can be learned!), courage, determination, being positive and having a good memory. By thinking about skills that we don't yet have but could learn opens up endless opportunities that we may not have thought possible.

Now it's your turn to write down some of your skills and strengths – try to put them in the right category if possible, with skills in the balloons on the games stall and strengths in the boxes alongside the hammer game.



Part 2

Achievements

Achievements

Now we've looked at our skills and strengths we move on to our proudest, personal achievements. To begin, we'll ask: 'what is an achievement?' The definition of an achievement is: "a thing done successfully with effort, skill, or courage."

So what...? Why should we talk about our achievements? Well, it allows us to find out more about what's important to us, what drives us and what we value most. By taking the time to think this over, we begin to feel pride in ourselves and, in time, respect and appreciate ourselves so much more. This, on top of looking at our strengths, helps create a more positive feeling towards ourselves.

A list of achievements will of course vary hugely from person to person but there is no wrong answer. For many, the focus may be on displaying a talent for something, for others it's about overcoming difficult experiences. Some would say: "The best achievement in life is doing something that you think you can't do." Others believe: "The greatest achievement in life is to stand up again after failing." Hopefully you can create a list with a mix of the two.

Your turn

Think about your proudest achievements. Remember, think outside the box!! There are achievements scattered throughout your whole life that require you to think a little bit wider and deeper about your past.

Examples

Moving school - very stressful but worth it in the end!

Doing a backflip in a circle pit at Reading Festival.
My life was complete!

Dealing with the loss of my grandfather.

Speaking up for myself when a person very dear to me was saying and doing things that really hurt me.

Not having seriously injured myself so far!
17 years and counting...

Mastering kickboxing despite struggling a lot with social anxiety and communication.

Learning to tie my laces. I'm dyspraxic and I've been trying since I was four years old, I only learnt last year and I couldn't stop smiling!

Overcoming my anger when I'd been bullied.

I helped out my family by looking after my young cousin - and enjoyed it.

TIP FOR MENTORS

Read through all the examples provided to help with ideas

My Achievements

Step Three

Part 1 Qualities

Qualities

The work that we've done so far has all been part of a discovery - to find out what our 'qualities' are. Let's define what a quality is: "Qualities are the personal characteristics of an individual that make up their personality." Good qualities can also be known as positive attributes.

To begin this exercise, start by imagining a large sieve. Imagine tipping all the words you've listed previously in to your sieve as a mix of strengths, skills and achievements. Give it a good stir and out of the sieve will come your qualities.

Why focus on our qualities? There are all sorts of good things that come to us if we're able to display good qualities such as being better at attracting the trust and respect of other people and forming stronger relationships more easily. This is even more powerful if we're aware of our qualities too.



Examples

Sense of Humour
Good Listener
Open Minded
Responsible
Enthusiastic
Self Reliant
Diplomatic
Insightful
Mediator
Outgoing
Balanced
Inventive
Positive
Curious
Leader
Social

To help get you started on listing your qualities, read through some of the examples shown. Then try to list at least five of your own, more if possible. Off you go!

MY QUALITIES

Part 2 Setbacks

Setbacks

We've already covered a lot by looking at the timeline of our lives, our skills and strengths, our achievements and our qualities. As we near the end of this third step, it's now time to look back over our lives so far and pick out those points we feel may be classed as our 'setbacks'.

The definition of a setback is: 'an event that delays your progress or reverses some of the progress that you have made.'

Generally we would use the term to describe a time when something happened that caused us to feel emotions of failure, distress or an inability to cope. These obstacles that cause us to stumble are never easy to handle. They can shake our foundation and make you question if there's something wrong with you and your abilities.

So why do we want to dwell on the past, particularly these negative bits? The great American motivational speaker Zig Ziglar talks about 'making friends with our past in order to be successful.' He encourages us to 'learn from our mistakes to turn our failures into opportunities.' If we can look back at our setbacks and learn from them then they have been a positive event. In many ways, life would be boring if we did the same old thing, it was all straight forward and had too much consistency. There would be no excitement or challenge to help us build our character. By dealing positively with these barriers we can focus not on how long we stay down, but rather how we get back up.

Setbacks can be springboards!

We must use our setbacks to develop us and not allow ourselves to be defined by them. Let's list some of our setbacks and think about any lessons that we may have learnt from them.



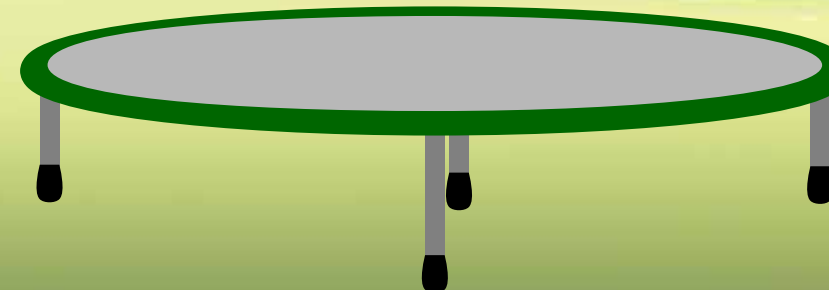
EG: Not getting the part I wanted in a play



EG: I had extra time when I would have been learning lines to spend visiting friends

More examples of setbacks

- 👎 Not doing well in an exam
- 👎 Falling out with a friend
- 👎 Breaking a bone and missing out
- 👎 Losing a loved one or pet
- 👎 You or a family member struggling with illness
- 👎 Having a possession stolen
- 👎 Being a victim of bullying
- 👎 A tricky family relationship
- 👎 Suffering from confidence issues in any area of your life



Step Four

Part 1 Dreams and Goals

Dreams and Goals

Our focus now turns to your future – a couple more lists are required... Both are important since the process will help equip you with the ability to make the most of your life and to get the most out of yourself. We're going to discuss your 'dreams' and your 'goals'. Definition time again!

Dreams: Dreams we think about on a regular basis because we want to improve our quality of life, gain something we don't already have or prove that we can do something. Dreams can be as big and unrealistic as you like, they could look a few weeks, months or years in to the future or span a lifetime. The key is that you don't have to commit to actually fulfilling a dream. You don't have to actively pursue it.

Goals: Many take their hopes and dreams to a new and higher level by making certain they become a goal – something we plan for and work towards. Goals are all about action. Goals turn dreams into reality.

The difference between the two:

- 1** **Goals** require action
Dreams are something you are just thinking about
- 2** **Goals** have deadlines and a time limit
Dreams can go on forever
- 3** **Dreams** are free
Goals have a cost
While you can daydream for free, goals don't come without a price - they require time and effort.
- 4** **Goals** produce results and can change your life.
Dreams unfortunately can't!
- 5** **Dreams** are imaginary
Goals are based in reality
You may dream of being Superman, goals are about what you can actually accomplish. Goals should be big, but not supernatural.
- 6** **Goals** have a finish line and an outcome
Dreams can go on forever
- 7** **Goals** are 'SMART'
- Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Timebound

Have a read through of the examples shown and create a list of your own dreams and goals. Keep in mind the word 'realistic' when setting your own goals, but don't feel you can't stretch yourself. Write your answers in the balloons and the balls.

DREAMS

GOALS

Part 2

What's holding us back?

What's holding us back

Whilst doing the last exercise, you may well have been asking yourself 'why am I doing this?' We'll stress again, the aim of this process is to equip you with the ability to make the most of your life and to get the most out of yourself. By thinking about our own dreams and goals we are forced to think about (and pre-empt) what might hold us back from achieving them. We can struggle with the concept of 'there's no way I can do this' which then prevents us pursuing our dreams.

In order to create goals and achieve our dreams we need a growth mindset - don't say "I can't". It's all about "I can't do it yet". Don't close a door to an opportunity. Thinking about and aiming for specific goals gives us drive to achieve something that we may not otherwise have set out to do.

In a way, you've done the easy bit - you've thought about all the things you'd like to do and to achieve. The hard bit is to actually do them. Have you ever set yourself the challenge of a New Year's resolution and not carried it through? We all know the feeling too well of not actually achieving our goals. It's important we understand why we don't so that we can start to understand how we can change and begin succeeding. By achieving our goals our sense of self-esteem is increased and we become happier human beings.

Your final exercise – read through the examples shown on the padlocks and think about what holds you back from achieving your goals. Be as honest as you can and write your answers in the padlocks.



EG: I just didn't believe in myself

EG: I didn't want it enough

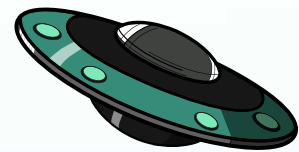
EG: I didn't think I could afford it

EG: Other people are better than me and I'll never be as good as them

EG: My goals are always too ambitious

EG: I just didn't get around to it

EG: I'm worried what others will think



And finally...



Congratulations on reaching the end of your four step course - hopefully you now feel that you've 'got what it takes' to feel better equipped for your life ahead. All of what you've done will help just a little towards understanding the many building blocks that make up confidence and self-esteem.

James Shone leads the charity behind this course called 'I Can and I Am'. James visits hundreds of schools a year presenting to pupils about much of what you've just been working through on this course. We'll end with the 'UFO' message below from James:

FORWARD UP OUT



1 U UP James' Christian faith is important to him. It's in times of crisis that he would say we must Look Up, indeed Psalm 121 encourages us, 'to lift our eyes.' While recovering from a series of operations in the High Dependency Unit in hospital James would occasionally see a curtain put around the bed of a fellow patient who had just died. It was at these moments that he was aware that he, along with all his fellow bed companions, was very ill indeed. He was left with a choice, either to trust that God is in control or to sink into hopeless despair. James chose to trust.

2 F FORWARD It's all too easy after a time of suffering to look back at all that has been lost. In James' case he can now no longer see, drive, play any moving ball sport, run or watch his children play. It's easy to look back and to allow the sense of loss to overwhelm us. However, it is crucial, James believes, to look forward with a sense of hope that new opportunities and possibilities will arise.

3 O OUT The last book James read when he could still see was Victor Frankl's masterpiece "Man's Search for Meaning." In this the Austrian Jew talks about surviving his time at Auschwitz. He cites his reason for remaining buoyant was sharing his weekly bread bun with other prisoners. This starving man shared something that he was desperate to consume but hormones were released which made him feel more fully alive. James often wakes from dreams such as playing cricket with his children and he has a stark choice, to give up or to get up. Remembering the lesson of Victor Frankl, James will often force himself to think of others, however small the action might be. It might involve sending an encouraging text message, emptying the dishwasher or buying his children a lollipop and putting it under their pillow. As he does this his sense of self worth returns. The key is never to sink into the hollow of self-pity.

THE OPPOSITE TO THIS IS DBI - DOWN, BACK AND IN
(A DANGEROUSLY BLEAK INDIVIDUAL...)



www.icanandiam.com

James' Story

I was a teacher. In July 2012, while still in my 30s, after many years experience in education, I was appointed to be a headmaster, the pinnacle of my career. Life's journey had begun in earnest. As part of my appointment process I undertook a routine medical. From being told to see an optician about my sight, I ended up, on the day before I was supposed to be flying to Greece on a family holiday, in front of a neurosurgeon, who informed me that I had a massive brain tumour. My life journey ground to a halt. After 23 hours of brain surgery, part of the tumour was removed, but so was my sight. In a moment, not only had I lost my sight, but I had lost the job that fulfilled my career ambition and all the things I had taken for granted: playing with my four children, skiing, golf, watching TV, driving...

So as 2013 dawned I had to face up to the fact that I had no job, no house and no purpose. And without the sight that would make everything possible. This was a time of personal pain as I sank to the pit of despair, believing that I had nothing to offer the world. These were challenging times, but over time, I came to realise that setbacks force us closer to the place we are meant to be. While I had lost so much I was able to reflect on what I still had, what I was really passionate about and what I was still able to do. As a teacher, the role that gave me most satisfaction was the pastoral care of pupils: helping them to see something in themselves that they couldn't, helping them to believe in their own potential. In a time of proliferating teenage anxiety, low self-worth and mental ill health, I suddenly realised that I could still do something to help: something that would allow me to make an impact on thousands of young people, not just the hundreds as a teacher. And so my purpose became clear and in 2015 'I Can and I Am' was founded.

Setbacks can be Springboards

Now I travel around the country speaking to pupils, teachers, businesses, pastoral leaders, parents, charities, churches, sharing the inspiration of my story and transforming people's thinking. Travel is not without its challenge. With my white stick I walk into people regularly, I have tried to go up the down escalator and on the train I sat on a fellow passenger's lunch! But I can laugh at these small setbacks, because I know they are a small price for achieving my destiny: to help others use their setbacks to find themselves and be who they are meant to be. I am not defined by my limitations and nor should you be. To reflect on our setbacks and problems and learn from them is so much better than to ruminate on our past.

**Wherever you are and whatever you are experiencing,
this message is, above all else, one of hope.**



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James' Blogs

James regularly posts blogs with simple, poignant messages to help in the 'battle plan' of life. Follow his blogs at www.icanandiam.com. Below are just a selection:

“ I can do things you cannot, you can do things I cannot. Together we can do great things.

I read this Mother Teresa quote last week and was really struck by it. As it was half term my context of team was the family. We have four children and during the week it was glaringly obvious that some things are naturally easy for some but almost impossible for others. This is where Mother Teresa's idea of team work is so important. We are all different and have very different skills sets and I think teachers, parents and leaders need to work hard to do two things. Firstly, we need to recognise what people's skills are and place them in the right space. The second thing we need to do is encourage them to appreciate/affirm the other people in their team, however different. I used to coach rugby and I always loved the way very different players played in the same team. A prop is very different to a fly half yet they each rely on each other to fulfil their potential. A team is powerful, let's work hard to achieve it. ”

Posted: October 31st 2016

“ Hope: A feeling or expectation that something good is going to happen.

When I came out of hospital a few years ago and was struggling to walk, talk, eat and look after my personal hygiene. I will never forget meeting a man I heartily respect and he said to me that my “battle in the coming months was going to be remaining hope filled.” Over the last few years I have battled to remain positive and hopeful for what lies ahead when there has been considerable loss. Over the course of this last week I feel and fear that our country has lost hope - whether it be with our government or our football team! I think the thing that I have learned is that it is as simple as a choice and a case of choosing the hopeful and positive path on offer and not always dwelling and lamenting on what might have been but is now not. I am no political blogger but know that the principle of choosing to be hopeful and dwelling on the positives is more important. ”

Posted: June 28th 2016

“ Nobody is better at being you than you

One of the things that I believe education really needs to start addressing is calling forth the individual in every individual. The world is a diverse and exciting place, made all the more so by the fact that we are all different! It saddens me greatly when people and organisations suppress and in some cases oppress people from being themselves. There is also, in some cases a homogenising that happens because people fear that if they are not 'x' they will be abandoned. So my plea to educational leaders this week is to work hard to allow individuals to truly be themselves - I am aware that this can sometimes be an enormous challenge. When I am speaking to young people my cry is simply 'Be Yourself!' ”

Posted: October 10th 2016

“ Focus more on where you are going to than what you're going through

This quote speaks to me a great deal at the moment. I am currently on half term with my 4 children and today is a stunning autumnal day. Yet I am indoors and lacking the energy to really put one foot in front of another. It's now 4 years since the invasive brain surgery I experienced for my expansive Meningioma and I feel I SHOULD be experiencing higher energy levels now. But I am not! One thing I have learned over the last few years is the peril of self pity. The 'poor old me' approach really does not work - one has to keep hope alive. Looking forward and believing for good is key. As well as this - I believe thankfulness for what is good and what one can do is also liberating from the heavy yoke of 'poor old me.' ”

Posted: October 26th 2016

“ Attitude versus Aptitude

I have just returned from Johannesburg visiting a number of schools. One visit particularly stands out which was when I spent a very moving few hours at a school called 'Hope Academy'. This is a school for physically disabled young people and I spoke to an audience of over 300, the vast proportion of who were in wheel chairs. They looked 'imprisoned' by their physical disability and they were clearly moved by the Nik Vujicic video of what it means to live with no arms or legs. At this point I really rose up in spirit and proclaimed to them all that our disability can be overcome by an attitude that is both positive and hope filled. It's 'attitude' not 'aptitude' that counts. ”

Posted: May 17th 2017

“ Life's too short to be little

I am very conscious that as we journey through life we can all too easily be felled by the little things. We can become derailed almost instantly the day starts so we all need to learn to remember what the big picture is and to maintain our gaze on this. Since losing my sight and becoming officially disabled (hate that term!) I have really had to learn this because all too often small things happen, as a result of my ineptitudes, that can potentially derail me. I have to learn not to allow this to happen and to keep going towards the big goal. At this time of exams I see this happening all too often with our children. If a pupil thinks that they've made a mess of an exam - they and perhaps we can become discouraged and draw slightly ridiculous conclusions. My view is that at times like these, we need to remember the big picture of what life and education is. It is where the old cliché 'our most valuable learning is done in our darkest moments' can really come in to its own. ”

Posted: June 19th 2017





**To find out about further mentoring resources available from 'I Can & I Am'
please contact us on mentoring@icanandiam.com**

**We would love to hear your feedback.
Please get in touch with any comments that you may have at mentoring@icanandiam.com**

To find out more about the 'I Can & I Am' charity please visit www.icanandiam.com