

# REBELLION & EXPERIMENTATION...

## PART ONE: OR REWARD & EXPLORATION?



Coalition of Alcohol and Drug Educators

**Dalgarno**  
INSTITUTE



**AH, TEENAGERS, THEY'RE GUNNA REBEL,  
SO JUST MANAGE THE DAMAGE!**

*What bright spark spewed that out?* It's actually not true!

But, if you repeat something long enough and loud enough what do you think happens to the hearer? They think it must be right? (It's a 'meme')

What is important to understand is that from an historical perspective, this is a relatively new 'narrative'. Post World War II, we actively started categorizing a new demographic, and we called it *adolescence*. It really is a 20<sup>th</sup> century 'idea'.

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Yes, the brain is going through its second most important development stage and can last 10-15 years.

Yes, it is a time of physiological and hormonal changes. However, the disturbing thing with new label of 'adolescence' was that it created, not a proactive pathway into adulthood, but was hijacked into being a holding pattern for the burgeoning adult that gave them permission to continue to play, but not be accountable, and that's what Social Justice would call 'soft bigotry'.

Some theories attempted then to define what physiological factors motivated behaviour, rather than the other way around and some theorist concluded that because the brain was in a growth transition phase it needed to 'experiment and rebel' in finding its own adult identity. (not helpful interpretation)



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## So what do we mean by 'soft bigotry'?

What 'soft' bigotry means is a patronizing and paternalizing label that disempowers someone from becoming their best. In simple terms put very low expectations onto someone in areas of agency, maturity and capacity – treat them as if they are either infants, or pretend they are disabled – that is bordering on insulting to both the teenager and those with genuine disabilities.



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In other words it can send a message that.. “you’re developing brain isn’t maturing you, its probably going to make you act even more selfishly, childishly and/or plain stupid, with little control’. This narrative is not only contrary to the science of the maturation process that is happening, but it actually hinders the maturing process. – Again, NOT helpful!

Even only 100 years ago, there was no ‘adolescent’. You were a child until you hit puberty and then you were an adult, and under apprenticeship on all levels of life you were expected to behave, act and receive respect and affirmation as an adult.

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In But that's only an interpretation and one that lends itself to 'soft bigotry'

Rights of Passage were common, and they were never around 'getting smashed', 'screwing around' or other such careless behaviour, as if that 'made you a grown up'! All it did was give you an idea that you were 'entitled' to act out.

Most non-western cultures have had long history of such rights of passage. You may know some common ones like Bar mitzvah and Bat mitzvah?

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**rites of passage  
of an indigenous  
boys journey**

VALUES

TRADITIONS

TRIBAL LAW

TRADITION

MODELS

EXPERIENCES

Along with opportunities – expectations – potential – relationships or lack of, all impact what conduct and behaviours we choose.



# THERMOSTAT OR THERMOMETER?

Which interpretation makes you a Thermostat and which one a Thermometer?

The Thermostat 'sets' the temperature of an environment  
– The Thermometer just follows it!

Are you making decisions, or are decisions making you?

Who is 'Calling the Shots'!

Thermostats make considered, wise, vision and values-based choices – the Thermometer 'reacts' to stimuli!

(So, quick question, which is the 'mature' response?)





# Feelings

# Values

# Influences



**How's Your Brain Brakes? At this age, you most definitely get to choose how good they are!!**





# QUOTE OF THE MOMENT



**A PERSON CAN MEET  
ANXIETY TO THE EXTENT  
THAT THEIR VALUES ARE  
STRONGER THAN THE  
THREAT.**

**PSYCHOLOGIST,  
ROLLO MAY**





# REBELLION OR REWARD?

The way the brain development/chemistry is engaged in this second phase of development will determine whether the emerging adult is rebellious or not!

How we have been designed is remarkable! Remember the bi-play with, values, behaviours, family, structures, discipline, motivators, relationships, brain development and epigenetics is staggering.



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**feelings**

~~**values**~~

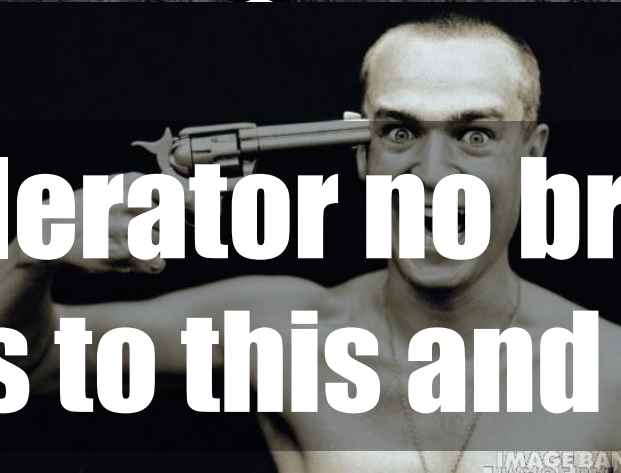
**influences**



What  
are



**All accelerator no brake! You add  
chemicals to this and you're #%\$?#!**





## CONVERSATION STARTER



### Doing a Good Deed – how'd that make ya feel?

- 1) Each think of and share about a time you did a good deed for someone, who didn't expect it, or maybe didn't even deserve it, and that blew them away.
- 2) How did that make YOU feel? What emotions and even 'energy' i.e. feeling motivated and pumped, did that produce and if it lasted, what helped it last?

That mild euphoria, is a result of the mind working in a good and healthy human context. Exploitation, manipulation, bullying, coercion don't give you this...These work contrary





## TAKE-A-WAYS:

### SCRIPT BUILDER POINTS



## ACTION:

What is a helpful socially responsible and/or justice focused cause you could get involved in, that builds resilience in you and your community, and doesn't tear it down?

Discuss with your facilitator and come back next session with some ideas in your journal.

(remember it's about helping others, not yourself.)