

DAY 36

READING 2

WHAT IS POSITIVE DEVELOPMENT?

A ground-breaking 30-year study into childhood temperament and its impact on adult behaviours, conducted by the Australian Institute of Family Studies (AIFS), tracked the progress and well-being of more than 1,000 children from infancy to their late twenties.

Many studies collect data about what goes wrong in young people's lives, and this information is invaluable, but it is only part of an intricate mosaic. The AIFS researchers are keenly interested in what is going right in the lives of young adults. Much of their research is devoted to looking at young people's successes and skills, and evidence that they are thriving. This is called positive development.

Positive development is not simply the absence of problems, but involves achieving optimal development and wellbeing. In measuring positive development in young people, researchers look for attributes and behaviours that enable them to take an active role in the community; be trusting and tolerant of people in society, especially those from different backgrounds; having confidence that important organisations in society would generally behave ethically and fairly; be responsible and empathetic in their relationships with others; and feel satisfied with their life and where it is heading. Young people high in these qualities are considered to be developing positively and functioning well.

Equally important to researchers is which determinants earlier in life help people to develop these strengths and thrive as young adults. To answer this, they looked back to the data the young people and their families had provided when they were children and adolescents. They found that young people who thrived later on in life tended in childhood and adolescence to have experienced strong family relationships, strong relationships with their peers, better adjustment to life at school, better control over their emotions, and an interest in community involvement. The study concluded that all of these experiences are assets in helping young people to flourish as they become adults.

The findings are an invaluable resource for developing interventions and programmes that reduce risks and also strengthen protective factors to assist optimal development.

1. What is the passage mainly about?
 - A. examining individual growth
 - B. overcoming problems
 - C. the benefits of long studies
 - D. ways of researching behaviour
2. In the second sentence of paragraph 3, to what does the word **them** refer?
 - A. researchers
 - B. attributes
 - C. behaviours
 - D. young people
3. According to the passage, what can be inferred about young people who are not developing positively?
 - a. many of their relationships are troubled.
 - b. they possibly lack faith in the authorities.
 - c. there is little that can be done for them.
 - d. they possess no positive attributes.
4. What will the results of the study likely lead to?
 - a. better parenting
 - b. improved peer relationships
 - c. methods for assisting some children
 - d. suggestions for further research

Vocabulary practice 1

Circle the odd ones out.

- | | | | | |
|---|------------|---------------|------------|------------|
| 1 | adamant | cynical | inflexible | obstinate |
| 2 | elated | jubilant | overjoyed | meticulous |
| 3 | apathetic | dispassionate | uneasy | withdrawn |
| 4 | compulsive | neurotic | obsessive | obnoxious |
| 5 | amiable | impassive | poised | serene |
| 6 | eloquent | principled | scrupulous | upright |

Vocabulary practice 2

Use the odd words out in C to complete the sentences below.

- 1 He'll never change; he'll always be a nasty, _____, bad-tempered, little man!
- 2 It's a pleasure to be in her company as she is always so _____ and welcoming.
- 3 Madge had become _____ in her old age and was distrustful of my motive for helping her.
- 4 An _____ speaker, the prime minister had won many battles in parliament over the years.
- 5 The suspect began to feel _____ when the detective mentioned a CCTV camera.
- 6 _____ by nature, Alex made sure every detail was perfect on the day of the wedding.

Vocabulary practice 3

Match the behaviour described by the speakers to an adjective from the list.

- | | |
|--|--------------------------|
| 1 'He told me they had found a cure for baldness and I actually believed him!' | ☐ |
| 2 'It's hard to get a reaction out of Roger; nothing seems to interest him.' | ☐ |
| 3 'When my dad gets an idea in his head, no one can make him change his mind.' | ☐ |
| 4 'The flight attendant was friendly and patient, and she really made the flight a joy.' | ☐ |
| 5 'I hate working with Thomas because he does things without asking anyone first.' | ☐ |
| 6 'I couldn't believe how rude that man was. He should have been kicked out.' | ☐ |
| 7 'Sarah is very careful with how she arranges her desk and how she plans her schedule.' | ☐ |
| 8 'I've got a bad feeling about this area. I think we should go back.' | ☐ |

- | | | |
|-------------|--------------|--------------|
| a obstinate | d apathetic | g compulsive |
| b amiable | e meticulous | h gullible |
| c uneasy | f obnoxious | |

Vocabulary practice 4

Circle the correct words.

- 1 Research says that boys are more **gullible** / **vulnerable** to peer pressure than girls.
- 2 Henry, whom you saw me with earlier, is a **distant** / **remote** relative of mine.
- 3 I enjoy Tina's company very much and she says the feeling is **mutual** / **reciprocal**.
- 4 That couple fight a lot; they're not in the least bit **companionable** / **compatible**.
- 5 Wherever Bill is, you'll find Ben; those two are **inseparable** / **unified**.
- 6 Rob and Deb aren't a couple; their relationship is purely **philosophical** / **platonic**.
- 7 Nothing compares to a parent's **conditioned** / **unconditional** love for their child.
- 8 Alex is a loving husband who is **devoted** / **dependent** to his wife, Maria.

Vocabulary practice 5

Complete the sentences with these words and the prefixes **ab-**, **dys-**, **mal-** or **mis-**.

adjusted behave errant function functional

- 1 Despite coming from a slightly _____ family, Robert was a well-mannered gentleman.
- 2 Debra's parents scolded her harshly for her _____ behaviour during her sister's wedding.
- 3 Often prisoners are _____ on release and a period of acclimatisation is required.
- 4 The machine had a _____ and it didn't finish printing the pages.
- 5 The teacher told the children not to _____ while she stepped out of class for a moment.

Vocabulary practice 6

Patience truly is a virtue

A study in the late 1960s demonstrated how children can become more (1) principled / neurotic and self-disciplined if they resist temptation regularly. A single marshmallow was placed in front of a child to monitor how they would (2) exert / conduct themselves in tempting situations. They were told they could eat that marshmallow immediately or have two if they waited 15 minutes. Most children said they would wait, but they couldn't resist and polished off the sweet quickly. The only way some children could keep a cool (3) face / head and avoid eating the marshmallow was to look away or cover their eyes. Researchers kept track of the children as they aged, and the ones who couldn't wait were more (4) compatible / vulnerable to problems such as obesity and were also more (5) tempted / prone to suffering from drug addiction and severe behavioural (6) disorders / dysfunctions in adulthood.

Essay question

It is believed that teenagers have to face tremendous difficulty due to physical and psychological change during the development period. What can be done to make those years become less struggling for adolescents?