



Creativity, perceptiveness and resilience are all important to teach young people

Infinite Possibilities: The Art of Changing your Life is an innovative empowerment programme teaching the message that 'thoughts become things,' and is transforming people's lives all over the world. The programme was developed in 2010 and first delivered in the Orange County Jail, Florida. The success of the programme led to it being expanded by creating a certification programme to train individuals to take the teachings out into all areas of society.

Trained facilitators are free to shape the programme to suit their particular expertise, but always keeping the brand name, *Infinite Possibilities*. The youth version, *Infinite Possibilities: I Believe in ME!*, was created in 2015 to develop confidence and self-esteem in young adults and has helped thousands of young people worldwide.

I became one of their UK-based facilitators in 2017 and developed my own theories from the principles of healthy, psychological functioning,



known as *The Three Principles of Mind, Consciousness and Thought* discovered by the late Sydney Banks in 1973. Mr Banks devoted his life's work to disseminating his teachings and insights, guiding people towards realising their own innate mental health. His work had a profound impact on the fields of psychology and psychiatry transforming the way the world views mental health.

I have incorporated *The Three Principles* into my version of *Infinite Possibilities* to create a unique two or three-part programme, *Infinite Possibilities: Creativity & Well-Being*, to improve personal effectiveness and guide young adults and teenagers towards realising their potential.

The sessions have an immediate impact on a student's sense of self and well-being, giving them a sense of control over their lives, understanding that, while they cannot control experiences which might negatively impact on their self-esteem, they can control how they react to them. Learning that thoughts become things and how to use their thoughts to shape their own future is inspirational for them. Empowerment means 'power to the self' and knowledge is power. Self-knowledge is the crucial education, the wisdom, we must teach our children to enable them to thrive, not just survive, into their future. As Barack Obama said, 'We did not come to fear the future. We came to shape it.' Now that's a quote to stick on the fridge.

Flavia lectures in schools and universities and offers private consultations: flavia@mayaempowerment.com

THE MENTOR

YOUTH EMPOWERMENT: REALISING POTENTIAL

Flavia Dalzell Payne teaches teenagers and young adults the power of positive thought

How can we fully equip our youth to navigate our increasingly complex, unpredictable, fast-forward world and empower them to create their best futures? This is a question which vexes both parents and teachers. The answer lies in the ancient Greek aphorism, 'Know Thyself.'

As children and teenagers begin to develop a sense of who they are, they often feel they are victims of circumstances, whether they be social, educational or the family challenges they face every day. These can cause negative thought patterns, false beliefs and many negative and destructive behaviours are precipitated by this feeling of victimisation.

However, there is much that we as adults can do to change this perception as evokes the educationalist, Sir Ken Robinson. He says, 'the aims of education are to enable students to understand the world around them and the talents within them so that they can become fulfilled individuals and active, compassionate citizens.'

To thrive in and make sense of our increasingly mechanised environment, teenagers and young adults need to be taught certain skills or 'products of the mind' which include creativity, perceptiveness and resilience. If we can educate them about the capacities of their own minds (the power of thought and imagination, the purpose of emotions and an understanding of how their beliefs shape their lives) they will be better equipped to manage life and cope with adversity. Empowering them with this information will have a huge impact on their behaviour and thought processes for life.