

Week 1 Individual Session: Being Productive

Session Goals

- ❖ Discuss what being productive means to you
- ❖ Explore ways to build your productivity
- ❖ Talk about the top tips for productivity from successful people

Pre-Session Instructions for Learner

- ❖ Read [this](#) short article on 16 tips to boost your productivity. Be prepared to discuss this article with your speaking buddy.

Pre-Session Instructions for Volunteer

- ❖ Read [this](#) short article on 16 tips to up your productivity. Be prepared to discuss this article with your speaking buddy.
- ❖ Be prepared to share your screen with [this quiz](#), [this video](#), [this article](#) and [this video](#).

During the Session:

- ❖ **[10 min]** Check in with your buddy– ask how their week has been and introduce the new unit “Social and Mental Matters” that you will both be following for the next few weeks. Tell them that you are going to talk about productivity in particular this week.
 - Then screen share [this quiz](#) and go through it together with your student to learn about their type of productivity.
- ❖ **[5 min]** Here are some words that relate to this week's activities. Go through them with your buddy and challenge them to use each word/phrase at least once in the session!
 - Self-sufficient (adjective) = needing no outside help in satisfying one's basic needs, especially with regard to the production of food. Emotionally and intellectually independent
 - From the beginning of 5th grade to the end, she became very self sufficient: doing her own laundry, making breakfast, and picking out her school outfits the night before.
 - Overwhelming (adjective) = a very great amount,(especially of an emotion) very strong
 - Volleyball season, paired with hours of homework, and babysitting, caused Jenny to be very overwhelmed.
 - Proactive (adjective) = of a person, policy, or action) creating or controlling a situation by causing something to happen rather than responding to it after it has happened

- Rather than waiting to see how the administration would handle the situation, the students chose to be proactive and protested for their right to be heard.
 - Procrastinate (verb) = to delay doing something that you should do, usually because you do not want to do it
 - People were dying of starvation while governments procrastinated.
- ❖ **[10 min]** Discuss both of your thoughts on the tips given in the [article](#) you read previously for pre-work. Below are some questions to help guide your discussion:
 - Do you regularly use any of these practices to be more productive?
 - If you could only select three, which of the tips would you like to implement into your life and why?
 - Do you think that any of these tips would actually make you less productive?
 - If you could add another tip to this list, what would it be and why?
 - Do you feel that these tips can be easily applied to areas of your life outside of school/work?
- ❖ **[10 min]** Screen share with [this](#) video on the science behind a productive mind, along with ways to overcome productivity blocks when having to complete larger tasks.
 - After watching this video, you and your buddy are going to write a short script for an imaginary video (although you can film one if you like!) about ways to be more productive, drawing from your own experience, and the tips given in both of the articles you just read. Your script should last 2-3 minutes, and include, in detail, 3 tips on how to be productive, an introduction to the topic, and a quick outro. Once you're finished writing, read your script out loud, alternating parts however you'd like.
- ❖ **[10 min]** Now read through [this article](#) discussing some of the common misconceptions people have about productivity, and the importance of defining productivity for yourself. After reading through, answer the following questions together:
 - How do you define "being productive"?
 - In what area of your life do you usually associate productivity with? Why do you think that is?
 - Do you think that accomplishing a lot means you are productive? Why or why not?
 - If you have had a toxic relationship with productivity in the past, how are you actively working to heal that relationship?
 - What is your go-to method to put yourself in a productive mood?
- ❖ **[10 min]** Screen share with this [mock video](#) on procrastination. Discuss the following questions:
 - Why do some people procrastinate?
 - Who is someone you know that always procrastinates?

- When is it good to procrastinate?
- When is it really bad to procrastinate?
- What kinds of things do you put off doing?
- How do you feel when other people put off something you want done soon?
- Who is the most patient person you know?
- What's the difference between patience and procrastination?
- Do you usually procrastinate when you have homework?
- What can procrastinators do to change their lives?

Week 2 Individual Session: The Power of Words

Session Goals

- ❖ Discuss the power of positive affirmations on a negative mind
- ❖ Talk about the power of mindset

Pre-Session Instructions for Learner

- ❖ Read this article about the positive effects of affirmations on your mindset and others. Make note of any challenging words or phrases.
- ❖ Make a list of three affirmations you want to start repeating to yourself, or that you already do, to share with your buddy during your session.

Pre-Session Instructions for Volunteer

- ❖ Read [this](#) article about the positive effects of affirmations on your mindset and others. Make note of any challenging words or phrases.
- ❖ Make a list of three affirmations you want to start repeating to yourself, or that you already do, to share with your buddy during your session.
- ❖ Be prepared to share your screen and audio with [this video](#), [this article](#), [this article](#), [this video](#) and [this video](#).

During the Session:

- ❖ **[1 min]** Check in with your buddy— each say one high point and one low point from this past week. Introduce today's session topic "The power of words".
- ❖ **[5 min]** Here are some words that relate to this week's activities. Go through them with your buddy and challenge them to use each word/phrase at least once in the session!
 - Manifest (verb) = display or show (a quality or feeling) by one's acts or appearance; demonstrate
 - Her father manifested symptoms of Crohn's Disease.
 - Visualization (noun) = the formation of a mental image of something
 - She visualized her success at her dream college in hopes of making it reality.
 - Blandishments (noun) = flattery intended to persuade
 - He refused to be moved by either threats or blandishments.
 - Bruit (verb) = display or show (a quality or feeling) by one's acts or appearance; demonstrate
 - This rumor has been bruited about for years.

- Circumlocution (noun) = the use of more words than are necessary, instead of speaking or writing in a clear, direct way
 - Politicians are experts in circumlocution.

- ❖ **[10 min]** Share your screen to watch [this video](#) with your buddy about the power of mindset shifts. After watching, have a short discussion about the advice given in the video; use the questions listed below to help guide your discussion:
 - Do you think you have a fixed mindset or a growth mindset? Which one do you think would lead to greater success in your current environment?
 - What is your opinion on being 'naturally' good at something? Do you think individuals are born with a higher success rate for certain activities than others? Why or why not?
 - What are some positive affirmations you could tell yourself to help you embrace a growth mindset?
 - How do you think growth mindsets could improve relationships with others?
 - How do you think your schooling would have been different if your teachers and administrators encouraged a growth mindset as opposed to grades/marks. And if you are in a school where this is the goal, how do you think you would feel if you went to a fixed mindset school?

- ❖ **[10 min]** Read through [this short article](#) together about the power of affirmations. After reading through, each of you pick one power you think is the best out of all of them and argue why that is the best one to your buddy. If you both picked the same power, great! Discuss why you both think that's the best — your reasons may be different!

- ❖ **[15 min]** Read through [this](#) article together on how to reconstruct your subconscious mind. There are quite a few challenging words in this article, so please stop and review or define any difficult words or phrases when needed. After reading, proceed to the activity below:
 - Imagine this article listed 14 ways to change your mind instead of 13, and you are writing the 14th addition. Choose a mindset tip for success to add to this list, and write a short paragraph going into further detail of how and why you should implement this practice into your daily life, much like the structure of the previous paragraphs. Feel free to write your paragraph with your buddy, or write it solo and then share it with them afterwards.
 - It may be more convenient to create a shared google doc so you can both see the progress of the paragraph.

- ❖ **[10 min]** Next, watch [this](#) video about overcoming negative thinking. After watching, engage in a short discussion following the questions posed below:
 - Do you think switching from a pessimistic mindset to a positive mindset is truly this simple? Why or why not?
 - How does negative thinking inhibit your ability to accomplish goals?

- How do you think your life would change if you adapted to a positive mindset over a negative mindset?
- ❖ **[10 min]** Share your screen for [this video](#) about the impact of daily positive affirmations. After watching the video, share the three affirmations each of you wrote down previously for pre-work. Explain why you chose these affirmations and how they apply to your life. After each of you have shared, come up with one or two affirmations together that could apply to both of your lives.
 - Bonus — each write the affirmation(s) you came up with on a sticky note, mirror, page of a book, or wherever you'll see it frequently, and make a pact to discuss the impacts of the affirmation, if any, during your next session.

Week 3 Individual Session: Decision-making and Feedback

Session Goals

- ❖ Learn about decision-making
- ❖ Discuss giving feedback

Pre-Session Instructions for Learner

- ❖ N/A

Pre-Session Instructions for Volunteer

- ❖ Be ready to share your screen with [this quiz](#), [this video](#), [this video](#) and [this video](#).

During the Session:

- ❖ **[10 min]** Check in with your learner, ask about their week, and introduce this new unit. Explain that you will be discussing decision making in today's session.
 - Ask your buddy if he/she is good at making decisions. Why (why not)?
 - Then screen share [this quiz](#) and go through it together with your student to learn about their type of decision-maker.

- ❖ **[5 min]** Here are some words that relate to this week's activities. Go through them with your buddy and challenge them to use each word/phrase at least once in the session!
 - Have second thought (phrase) = change your mind after more thought
 - I wanted an apartment, but on second thought, I prefer to have a garden.
 - Mull over something (phrase) = think carefully before making a decision
 - He mulled over several options before making a decision
 - (A) toss-up (noun) = the choice between two equally-good options (like tossing a coin).
 - Both athletes are in excellent condition. It's a toss-up which of them will win.
 - Knee-jerk decision (phrase) = if you call someone's response to a question or situation a knee-jerk reaction, you mean that they react in a very predictable way, without thinking.
 - The knee-jerk reaction to this is to call for proper security in all hospitals.
 - Be on the fence (phrase) = avoid making a decision or choice
 - Many consumers are still on the fence, waiting for a less expensive computer to come along.

- ❖ **[15 min]** Talk about how to make faster decisions. Screen share and watch [the video](#) by TEDtalks. Then discuss it using the questions below:
 - What do FOMO and FOBO mean?
 - Do you agree that we live in the world of overwhelming choice? What is a paradox of choice?
 - How is it possible to overcome FOBO?
 - What are the types of decisions heard in the video? Can you provide examples for each type?
 - Talk about a few personal and professional no-stakes, low-stakes and high-stakes decisions you've made in your life. Talk about what decisions you made and how you made them.
 - Tell about your long-term and short-term goals.
 - Have you ever made a decision then changed your mind? If yes, explain the situation.
 - Have you ever asked the opinion of someone else before making a decision? If yes, explain the situation.
 - Do you think people make bad decisions because of peer pressure? Why or why not?
 - Tell me about a setback you had in your life.

- ❖ **[15 min]** Move on talking about decision-making. Screen share and watch [the video](#). Think about how you make decisions and which factors you consider to make the right decision:
 - weight pros and cons for each option
 - reduce the number of deciding factors to a minimum
 - discuss with somebody
 - Look from different perspective
 - choose one of the options at random
 - trust your gut
 - postpone decision until there is better option

- ❖ **[10 min]** Talk about feedback. Initially discuss the following questions:
 - What is feedback?
 - In which situations might you give and receive feedback?
 - When was the last time you gave or received feedback? What happened?
 - Have you received any feedback recently? Have you ever given any?
 - Do you think all cultures and societies feel the same about feedback?
 - Then screen share and watch [this video](#) on how to give constructive feedback. Discuss the following points:
 - What is constructive feedback?
 - Is constructive feedback good?
 - Why is it important to give constructive feedback?
 - What are the benefits of constructive feedback?
 - What are the main tips for giving feedback?

- ❖ **[20 min]** It's time to practice giving feedback. Read the following situations and speculate on how you would react, behave and say in the following situations:
- Jane is typically a reliable employee, though she has seemed distracted at work and is turning in assignments late. Rather than firing Jane immediately, let her know you have noticed these changes and would like to resolve them.
 - You have received complaints from some members of your team about one of their colleagues. This person regularly goes out for smoking breaks, is often a little late in the morning and sometimes leaves work early, too.
 - Jade excels at working independently but often has trouble collaborating with others or providing input during meetings. You can applaud her strong work ethic while communicating the benefits of practicing her interpersonal skills at work.

Week 4 Individual Session: Maintaining Positivity and Balance

Session Goals

- ❖ Discuss ways to keep a balanced lifestyle and a positive attitude
- ❖ Talk about some of the positive effects of the Covid-19 pandemic

Pre-Session Instructions for Learner

- ❖ Read [this](#) article from the New York Times about what young people can do to maintain a balanced lifestyle. Write down any challenging words or phrases, and be prepared to discuss the contents with your buddy during the session.
- ❖ Please watch a [video](#) about turning a busy lifestyle into a balanced lifestyle. Be ready to share your thoughts.

Pre-Session Instructions for Volunteer

- ❖ Read [this](#) article from the New York Times about what young people can do to maintain a balanced lifestyle. Write down any challenging words or phrases, and be prepared to discuss the contents with your buddy during the session.
- ❖ Be prepared to share your screen and audio with [this document](#), [this article](#), [this video](#), [this video](#), [this one](#) and [a document](#).

During the Session:

- ❖ **[10 min]** Check in on your buddy, ask how their week is going so far, and introduce today's topic. Discuss the questions of being a pessimist and an optimist.
 - Share [this document](#) with a short quiz. Complete it and compare your results.
- ❖ **[5 min]** Here are some words that relate to this week's activities. Go through them with your buddy and challenge them to use each word/phrase at least once in the session!
 - Self-awareness (noun) = knowledge and understanding of your own character
 - Counseling can help to achieve greater self-awareness.
 - Blithesome (adjective) = carefree and happy and lighthearted
 - If you are feeling blithesome, you might want to skip or at least kick your heels up in the air.
 - Compassionate (adjective) = showing or having sympathy for another's suffering
 - The public's response to the crisis appeal was generous and compassionate..
 - Anguish (phrase) = extreme unhappiness caused by physical or mental suffering
 - His anguish at the outcome of the court case was very clear.

- ❖ **[15 min]** Discuss both of your thoughts on the information presented in the [article](#) you both read for pre-work. Tackle any challenging words or phrases by going over their meaning together. Below are some discussion questions to help guide your conversation:
 - Would you follow any of the advice given in the article? Why or why not?
 - What did you think about the “channel Yoda” statement? Did you take it seriously or not?
 - In what areas of your life could you apply some of these suggestions to?
 - What are some ways you have already used these tips regularly?
 - Do you think you’ll go through a ‘quarterlife crisis’? Why or why not?

- ❖ **[10 min]** Read through [this](#) article on the predicted positive effects of Covid-19. Reflect on if some of these predictions were correct, and share some other positive aspects of the pandemic that you found while you were in quarantine.

- ❖ **[15 min]** Next, watch these two videos: [video 1](#), [video 2](#) about some of the other positive effects of the Covid-19 Pandemic. After watching, engage in a short discussion following the questions below:
 - How do you predict some of these benefits will continue to help people long term?
 - Are there any aspects of the pandemic that were cause for happiness in your life? For example, maybe you’re more introverted, so not having to engage in a lot of social outings was enjoyable for you.
 - Did you build any particular lifestyle skills during the pandemic? For example, develop better study habits, increase your productivity, or learn to set firm boundaries.
 - What is something that you think will now become worse since the pandemic has ended?

- ❖ **[15 min]** Discuss [this](#) video from pre-work about turning a busy lifestyle into a balanced lifestyle. Discuss the questions below:
 - How do you work to maintain balance in your life?
 - Do you often find yourself trying to multitask? Will you continue to do so even after watching this video?
 - How do you incorporate ‘white space’ into your daily life?
 - Do you often find yourself trying to make yourself ultra busy?
 - In what area(s) of your life do you find it the most difficult to maintain balance (work, home, social, etc.)?

- ❖ **[10 min]** Discuss Danish recipe for happiness called “hygge”. Watch [the video](#) first, then discuss the questions below:

- Are you a happy person?
- What is happiness for you?
- What do you think is the color for happiness?
- Do you think that happiness lies within you? Or does it depend upon other people and external things?
- Can money buy happiness?
- Is happiness a state of mind?
- What makes you feel happy?
- What are the three most important things for you to be happy?
- Is happiness relative, that is, does it have a different meaning for each person?
- Are single people happy?
- Would you be happier with a soul mate or single?
- Does having an animal/pet make you happy?
- What is the effect that animals/pets have on people to make them feel happy?
- What makes you happy?
- When was the happiest time of your childhood?
- Can you be happy if you are rich?
- Can you be happy if you are poor?
- How can you become happy again when you are sad?
- Is happiness a goal?
- How often do you feel really happy?
- Are the people in your country generally very happy?
- Are you very happy most of the time?
- What makes you unhappy?
- What's the most miserable you've been?
- How happy are you compared with your friends?
- Do you wake up happy every morning?
- Do you agree that older people are less happy?
- What is there to be happy about in the world today?

❖ **[10 min]** OPTIONAL: if you have time, go to [this document](#) and discuss the questions there.

Week 5 Individual Session: Helicopter Parenting

Session Goals

- ❖ Discuss overprotective and very involved parenting style
- ❖ Talk about separation from parents and generation gaps

Pre-Session Instructions for Learner

- ❖ Prepare a short presentation of your generation for antecedents for 3-5 minutes

Pre-Session Instructions for Volunteer

- ❖ Be ready to share your screen with [a picture](#), [this video](#), [this article](#) and [this video](#)

During the Session:

- ❖ **[5 min]** Check in on your buddy, ask how their week is going so far, and introduce today's topic. [Show this picture](#) and elicit your learner's ideas on how parents then and now differ in your countries.
- ❖ **[5 min]** Here are some words that relate to this week's activities. Go through them with your buddy and challenge them to use each word/phrase at least once in the session!
 - Indulgent (adjective) = tending to allow somebody to have or do whatever they want
 - Mothers tend to be less indulgent towards daughters.
 - Coddle (verb) = to treat someone very well and give them too much care and attention
 - She coddled him when he was sick.
 - Tiger Parent (phrase) = a form of strict parenting, whereby parents are highly invested in ensuring their children's success
 - Tiger parents tend to micromanage their children's lives in ensuring they meet their high expectations.
 - Ground (verb) = to forbid someone to go out and spend time with friends as a punishment
 - His father grounded him for a week for lying.
- ❖ **[15 min]** Talk about 'helicopter parenting'. Watch [this video](#) and then discuss the questions below:

- How do we acquire new skills?
 - What are the 4 steps for teaching kids skills?
 - What are the pros and cons of helicopter parenting?
 - Why do parents overprotect their kids?
 - Life is about having the confidence that if you take the wrong path, you can get on the right path. That if you fall down, you can get back up. (agree or disagree).
 - How would you describe an ideal parent?
 - What is the best thing about your mother/father?
 - If you are a parent, do you think you are a good one? If not, do you guess you would make a good one?
 - As a parent would you let your child go out with her/his friends in early teens?
 - As a parent would you allow your child to pierce their bodies? Why? Why not?
 - How can you bring up your children to be independent?
 - Do you spoil your children? If so, in what ways? If not, why?
 - How would you handle sibling rivalry?
 - What do you think of the father staying at home and the mother working out?
 - What do you think about working parents, especially working mothers?
- ❖ **[15 min]** Talk about developing independence from parents. Look through [this article](#) with tips on how to become independent from parents, then discuss the questions below:
- Do(Did) you prefer living on your own or with your parents? Why?
 - Is money a crucial factor for you to decide whether to move out or not?
 - Why in some cultures do young people tend to live with their parents before they get married and others not? To what extent is this affected by traditional family values?
 - Are you more independent from your parents now than you were in compulsory secondary education?
 - Name some things you can do now that you weren't allowed to do in secondary education.
 - Are you as independent now as you would like to be?
 - When do you think you will become financially independent?
 - Do you think this age is the same in all countries?
 - Do (did) your parents let you stay out late?
 - What time do you have to be home?
 - Do most teenagers equate wealth with happiness? What's your opinion?
 - Are young people today less resilient and independent than they should be?
- ❖ **[20 min]** Talk about generation gaps. [Watch this video](#), then discuss the questions below:
- What is a generation gap?
 - Have you ever felt a generation gap with your friends and parents?
 - How do you overcome the generation gap?
 - When do you feel the generation gap the most?
 - Is it possible to overcome a generation gap?

- At what point in life does the generation gap seem to be the largest?
- Do you think you can be a better parent than your own parents in future?
- Do you think it is OK to date or marry someone of a different generation to yourself, either older or younger?
- Some people think it is OK to marry a much older man but not a much older woman? Do you agree?
- How would you feel if your father was a generation older than your mother? Do you know a family where this is the case?
- What could be some problems with a partnership or marriage of different generations?
- Do you think your generation's fight is similar to your parents' generation's fight?
- What do you think are some of the advantages or disadvantages of another generation?
- When did you first become an adult in your mind?
- What role does music play in generation gaps?
- When is an age gap beneficial, and when is it a hindrance?
- How can you overcome a generation gap?
- Can you talk to your parents about everything?
- Do you ever disagree with your parents/grandparents about topics such as music, style and values?
- How many years difference causes a generation gap?
- Is it possible for parents and children to be friends?
- What influences the styles, values and interests of a generation?
- Are people from the "older" generation always more wise and correct in their ways of thinking and choices? Why or why not?
- Do you ever disagree with your friends/ parents/relatives/grandparents about topics such as music, style and values?
- Is it possible for parents and children to be friends? Or for people of different generations to be friends?
- What influences the styles, values and interests of a generation? How long is a generation?
- What is an example of a time you and your friends/parents/relatives/grandparents had an argument or disagreement? Do you think it was related to the generation gap?
- How would you describe your generation to your antecedents? Prepare a short presentation for 3-5 minutes.