

GIRLHOOD BY A TEENAGER..



DEDICATION

I WROTE THIS BOOK FROM A PLACE OF LOVE TO HELP NAVIGATE YOU AS A TEENAGE GIRL THROUGH THE COMPLEXITY OF GIRLHOOD!

<3





CONTENTS

DEDICATION CHAPTER 0	00
CHAPTER I IDENTITY	01
CHAPTER II AFFIRMATIONS	02
CHAPTER III THE GUT BRAIN CONNECTION	03
CHAPTER IIII UNDERSTANDING HORMONES	04
CHAPTER IIIII AUTONOMIC NERVOUS SYSTEM	05
CHAPTER IIIIII SNS AND PNS	06
CHAPTER IIIIIII REWIRING THE BRAIN	07
CHAPTER IIIIIIII RESILIENCE	08
CHAPTER IIIIIIIII MANAGE TECHNOLOGY	09
CHAPTER IIIIIIIIII CLOSING STATEMENT	10
CHAPTER IIIIIIIIII ABOUT THE AUTHOR	11

IDENTITY



WHEN YOU'RE FOUR OR TEN, YOU HAVE NO CARE IN THE WORLD ABOUT HOW YOU SHOULD BE OR WHO YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO BE. AS YOU GROW, YOU START TO NOTICE THAT NO ONE CALLS THEM PLAYDATES ANYMORE OR ENJOYS THE FLUFFINESS OF STUFFED TOYS. PINK PONY UNDERPANTS TURN INTO BLACK G-STRINGS, AND DAGGY COLOURFUL OUTFITS ARE NOW CROPPED TOPS AND TIGHT PANTS THAT PURPOSELY SEXUALIZE YOUR BODY. IDENTITY HAS GOT YOU. DON'T SIT WITH THEM; THEY ARE WEIRD. YOU WANT TO BE POPULAR AND LIKED BY ALL. THEREFORE, YOU NEED TO DO WHAT EVERYONE ELSE IS DOING: LOSE YOUR TALENTS, DROP YOUR HOBBIES, SEXUALIZE YOURSELF. YOU ONLY HAVE POTENTIAL IF YOU'RE ATTRACTIVE AND HAVE A GOOD BODY, BUT FOR PEOPLE TO KNOW THAT, YOU HAVE TO SHOW THAT. IN THE MAKING OF IT ALL, YOU LOSE YOURSELF; YOU HAVE NO PASSIONS OR DESIRES.





MOST SAY AT 10 THE CHILD HAS OFFICIALLY MET IDENTITY AND WILL LOSE THAT CONNECTION, THAT SPARK THEY ONCE HAD. BUT NO ONE EVER BELIEVES IT WILL HAPPEN TO THEIR LITTLE SUNSHINE.

YOUR PARENTS NOTICE THE LITTLE GIRL THAT WAS ONCE THERE ISN'T SO MUCH THERE ANYMORE. THE SPARK EVENTUALLY HAS FADED. JUST TO CHANGE MY IDENTITY, ALL THIS FOR WHAT, TO BE LIKED? TO GET VALIDATION FROM UNWORTHY PEOPLE WHO COULDN'T CARE LESS ABOUT YOU.



AFFIRMATIONS <3

I am beautiful I am brave

I am kind I believe in me

I am amazing I can do this

I can do anything

I matter

I am loved

I can make a difference

THE GUT BRAIN CONNECTION

THE GUT BRAIN CONNECTION (GBA) IS A SYSTEM IN YOUR BODY THAT ALLOWS INFORMATION FROM YOUR GUT TO REACH AND INFLUENCE BRAIN ACTIVITIES.

THIS WORKS BY SIGNALLING MOLECULES (INCLUDING NEUROTRANSMITTERS, HORMONES, OR IMMUNOLOGICAL FACTORS) BEING CREATED IN YOUR STOMACH AND SIGNALLING WHAT IS GOING ON TO YOUR BRAIN. WHEN YOUR STOMACH ISN'T FUNCTIONING OPTIMALLY, THE SIGNALLING MOLECULES GENERATED CAN ACTUALLY IMPACT THE BALANCE OF NEUROTRANSMITTERS THAT PLAY A ROLE IN MENTAL HEALTH CONDITIONS.



**HAPPY GUT
MEANS HAPPY
BRAIN!**

FUN FACTS!

**OUR MICROBIOME IS AS UNIQUE AS
OUR FINGERPRINT
THE GUT TALKS TO OUR BRAIN**

**OUR MICROBIOME AFFECTS AND
CONTROLS ALL OF OUR MOODS JUST
LIKE THE BRAIN**

**90% OF SEROTONIN IS MADE FROM
OUR GUT**



EATING FOODS THAT ARE BAD FOR YOUR GUT HEALTH OR 'MICROBIOME' CAN CAUSE INFLAMMATION, WHICH INCREASES THE RISK OF MENTAL ILLNESS.

WHAT STEPS CAN YOU TAKE TO SUPPORT A HEALTHY GUT MICROBIOME?

CONSUME MORE WHOLEFOODS AND FEWER CARBOHYDRATES, SUGAR, FAT, AND SATURATED FAT IN ORDER TO MAINTAIN GOOD GUT HEALTH.



SOME FOODS TO DEFINITELY AVOID

- **REFINED SUGAR**
- **FACTORY-FARMED MEAT**
- **REFINED GRAINS**
- **ARTIFICIAL SWEETENERS**
- **TOO MUCH SATURATED FAT**
- **FRIED FOODS**



UNDERSTANDING HORMONES!



WHAT IS SEROTONIN?

SEROTONIN IS A NEUROTRANSMITTER THAT REGULATES MANY PHYSIOLOGICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL FUNCTIONS IN THE BODY. IT IS MOSTLY PRESENT IN THE GI TRACT, BLOOD PLATELETS, AND THE CENTRAL NERVOUS SYSTEM (CNS). SEROTONIN IS IMPLICATED IN MOOD CONTROL, SLEEP, HUNGER, AND SENSATION OF PAIN IN THE CNS. IT IS FREQUENTLY RELATED WITH SENTIMENTS OF CONTENTMENT AND SATISFACTION.

WHAT IS DOPAMINE?

DOPAMINE IS ANOTHER KEY NEUROTRANSMITTER WHICH OPERATES AS A MESSENGER FOR CHEMICALS IN THE BRAIN IS DOPAMINE. IT IS ESSENTIAL IN REWARDING BEHAVIOUR, ENJOYMENT, AND LEARNING THROUGH REINFORCEMENT. DOPAMINE IS LINKED TO MANY DIFFERENT FUNCTIONS, INCLUDING MOTIVATION, FOCUS, EMOTIONS, AND MOVEMENT REGULATION. IT IS RELEASED IN REACTION TO ENJOYABLE ACTIVITIES OR STIMULI AND ENCOURAGES REWARDING ACTIONS.



WHAT IS OXYTOCIN? OXYTOCIN IS A HORMONE AND NEUROTRANSMITTER THAT IS FREQUENTLY REFERRED TO AS THE "LOVE HORMONE" OR "BONDING HORMONE." THE HYPOTHALAMUS PRODUCES IT, WHILE THE PITUITARY GLAND RELEASES IT. OXYTOCIN IS CRUCIAL FOR RELATIONSHIPS, RELIABILITY, AND CONNECTION. IT APPEARS IN A VARIETY OF SETTINGS, INCLUDING CHILDBIRTH TO AID IN LABOUR AND LACTATION, AND IT ALSO AIDS IN THE CONNECTING OF MOTHERS AND BABIES. FURTHERMORE, OXYTOCIN IS CRUCIAL IN THE FORMATION AND UPKEEP OF SOCIAL TIES IN LOVE PARTNERSHIPS AND FRIENDSHIPS.





HOW CAN TEENAGERS GET THESE IMPORTANT HORMONES IN SAFE WAYS?



TEENS CAN SAFELY AND NATURALLY INCREASE THE AMOUNT OF SEROTONIN, DOPAMINE, AND OXYTOCIN THROUGH A VARIETY OF HABITS & ACTIVITIES. HERE ARE SOME POINTERS:



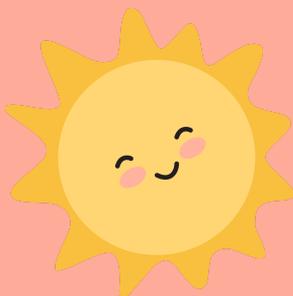
REGULAR PHYSICAL ACTIVITY, SUCH AS RUNNING, DANCING, OR PARTICIPATING IN SPORTS, CAN ENHANCE THE PRODUCTION OF DOPAMINE AND SEROTONIN, INCREASING A SENSE OF WELL-BEING AND REDUCING STRESS.



HEALTHY DIET: CONSUMING A BALANCED DIET WITH PLENTY OF FRUITS, VEGETABLES, WHOLE GRAINS, AND LEAN PROTEINS PROVIDES THE NECESSARY NUTRIENTS FOR NEUROTRANSMITTER PRODUCTION AND REGULATION.



SPENDING TIME OUTSIDE AND OBTAINING NATURAL SUNLIGHT MIGHT ENHANCE SEROTONIN LEVELS AND IMPROVE HAPPINESS.



BUILDING LASTING CONNECTIONS AND SPENDING TIME WITH FRIENDS AND FAMILY CAN CAUSE THE PRODUCTION OF OXYTOCIN, WHICH INCREASES FEELINGS OF CONNECTION AND TRUST.



SLEEP: GETTING ADEQUATE RESTORATIVE SLEEP IS CRITICAL FOR MAINTAINING A HEALTHY BALANCE OF NEUROTRANSMITTERS IN THE BRAIN.

MINDFULNESS AND MEDITATION: USING BOTH OF THESE PRACTISES WILL HELP YOU REDUCE STRESS AND RAISE SEROTONIN LEVELS IN YOUR BRAIN.



ACTS OF KINDNESS: PERFORMING ACTS OF KINDNESS AND ASSISTING OTHERS CAN INCREASE EMOTIONS OF HAPPINESS AND CONTENTMENT THROUGH RELEASING DOPAMINE.

TEENAGERS MUST DEVELOP HEALTHY HABITS AND AVOID DANGEROUS BEHAVIOURS OR SUBSTANCES THAT CAN LOWER NEUROTRANSMITTER LEVELS.



AUTONOMIC NERVOUS SYSTEM

WHAT IS THE AUTONOMIC NERVOUS SYSTEM AND WHAT DOES IT DO?

THE AUTONOMIC NERVE SYSTEM (ANS) REGULATES INTERNAL BODILY CONDITIONS. IT IS ALSO KNOWN AS THE 'VISCERAL NERVOUS SYSTEM' OR THE 'INVOLUNTARY NERVOUS SYSTEM'. THE AUTONOMIC NERVOUS SYSTEM (ANS) IS A COMPONENT OF THE PERIPHERAL NERVOUS SYSTEM. ALL AUTOMATIC ACTIONS ARE CONTROLLED BY THE AUTONOMIC NERVOUS SYSTEM. THAT IS, THE MAJORITY OF ITS OPERATIONS ARE CARRIED OUT WITHOUT THE PERSON'S CONSCIOUS CONTROL. TYPICALLY, THE PERSON IS UNAWARE OF WHAT THE ANS IS DOING. HOWEVER, SOME ANS ACTIONS, SUCH AS BREATHING, COLLABORATE WITH THE CONSCIOUS MIND.



THE AUTONOMIC NERVE SYSTEM REGULATES SEVERAL DIVERSE FUNCTIONS, INCLUDING HEART RATE, DIGESTION, BREATHING RATE, SALIVATION, SWEAT, PUPIL DIAMETER, AND URINE OUTPUT.

Sympathetic nervous system

Revs you up, preparing you to fight, take flight or freeze

- heart beats fast
- Breath is fast and shallow
- Pupils of eyes expand (can make you sensitive to light)
- Gut becomes inactive (difficult to digest)
- Blood rushes to your skeletal muscles and away from your brain, making it hard to think clearly
- Hormones rush through your body, making you feel anxious
- Expands your energy



Parasympathetic nervous system

Relaxation response
Calms you down, preparing you to rest, think and restore

- Heart beats in slow, rhythmic pattern
- Breath is full and slow
- Pupils of eyes shrink
- Gut is active (helps you digest and absorb the nutrients from your food)
- Increased blood flow to gut, lungs and brain
- Hormones rush in, lifting your mood and helping you to relax
- Conserves your energy



REWIRING THE BRAIN



REWIRING THE BRAIN, ALSO KNOWN AS ENCOURAGING NEUROPLASTICITY, ENTAILS A VARIETY OF TACTICS AND BEHAVIOURS THAT PROMOTE THE DEVELOPMENT OF FRESH CONNECTIONS BETWEEN NEURONES AS WELL AS THE RESILIENCY OF EXISTING ONES. HERE ARE SOME STRATEGIES FOR PROMOTING BRAIN REWIRING:



WHAT IS NEUROPLASTICITY?

NEUROPLASTICITY IS SUPER SIGNIFICANT IN RETENTION OF INFORMATION, BRAIN INJURY RECOVERY, AND THE GROWTH OF SKILLS AND COMPETENCE. IT IS A BASIC IDEA IN NEUROSCIENCE THAT EMPHASISES THE BRAIN'S AMAZING ABILITY TO ADAPT AND EVOLVE WHEN EXPOSED TO VARIOUS SITUATIONS AND CHALLENGES.



HERE ARE SOME STRATEGIES FOR PROMOTING BRAIN REMODELLING.

LEARNING AND EDUCATION

PHYSICAL EXERCISE

SOCIAL INTERACTION

MINDFULNESS MEDITATION

NUTRITION

QUALITY SLEEP

HOBBIES





RESILIENCE

WHY IS RESILIENCE IMPORTANT

INDIVIDUALS BENEFIT FROM RESILIENCE AS IT ALLOWS THEM TO EFFECTIVELY COPE WITH ADVERSITY, SUSTAIN A HEALTHY STATE OF MIND AND BODY, CREATE STRONGER CONNECTIONS, ADAPT TO CHANGES, AND ULTIMATELY LEAD MORE HAPPY LIVES. IT IS A VITAL SKILL THAT CAN BE CULTIVATED OVER TIME.



LIST OF WAYS TO BE RESILIENT!

- ADAPTATION TO CHANGE
- PRACTICE HEALTHY COPING MECHANISMS
- BUILD A SUPPORT NETWORK
- SET REALISTIC GOALS
- LEARN FROM ADVERSITY
- MAINTAIN PERSPECTIVE
- PRACTICE SELF-COMPASSION



WHY YOU NEED TO MANAGE TECHNOLOGY AS A TEEN!

AS A TEENAGER, MANAGING YOUR TECHNOLOGY USAGE IS CRITICAL SINCE IT HAS A DIRECT IMPACT ON YOUR PHYSICAL AND EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING, ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT, AND SOCIAL GROWTH. EXCESSIVE SCREEN TIME CAN CAUSE SLEEP DISRUPTIONS, DECREASED PHYSICAL ACTIVITY, AND INCREASED STRESS. IT CAN ALSO IMPAIR YOUR ABILITY TO CONCENTRATE ON ACADEMICS AND COMMUNICATE WITH FRIENDS AND FAMILY IN PERSON, POTENTIALLY HURTING YOUR SOCIAL SKILLS AND RELATIONSHIPS. LEARNING TO BALANCE YOUR USE OF TECHNOLOGY ALLOWS YOU TO REAP ITS EDUCATIONAL AND COMMUNICATIVE BENEFITS WHILE AVOIDING ITS NEGATIVE IMPACTS, PROVIDING A HEALTHIER AND MORE BALANCED LIFESTYLE DURING YOUR FORMATIVE YEARS.

SIMPLE WAYS TO REDUCE SCREEN USAGE

SET CLEAR GOALS



SET APP TIME LIMITS



USE "DO NOT DISTURB" MODES



UNPLUG BEFORE BED



ENGAGE IN OFFLINE HOBBIES



UNPLUG BEFORE BED



**THE MEANING AND PURPOSE
OF THIS EBOOK WAS TO TRY
HELP GIRLS JUST LIKE ME
FLOURISH THROUGH THE
ROLLERCOASTER RIDE OF
PUBERTY AND GIRLHOOD.
EXPLAINING THE KEY THINGS
I WISH I KNEW A LONG TIME
AGO...**

**I HOPE MY EBOOK ALLOWED
YOU TO RELATE AND TAKE
ON SOME KNOWLEDGE INTO
THE NEXT CHAPTERS IN
YOUR LIFE!**

