

***The Imagine Project:
A Powerful Tool to Help
Individuals Overcome
Trauma and Stress***

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Mindfulness Activity

Breathing Hands

- Spread one hand out like a star
- Use the index finger on your other hand to trace the outline of your star hand
- Take a deep breath in as you move to the top of your thumb
- Breathe out as you move down between your thumb and first finger
- Take another breath in as you move to the top of your first finger
- Breathe out as you move down between your first and second finger
- Repeat until you have taken five slow deep breaths

reminder:

**take care
of yourself!**

Give Yourself Permission

- Because we are going to be sharing stories related to trauma, there is a chance that the stories we hear or write today may trigger something for you or for someone you may know.
- Give yourself permission to step-out or check-out at any point if you need to do so.

Stress and Trauma in Students

Students and adults are overwhelmed with the stress, trauma, and drama of everyday life. They have few resources to support their social-emotional health. Difficulties with life issues show up as an inability to focus, learn, and have positive relationships in the classroom and in life.

Stress and Trauma in Students

- Teen stress levels are 5.8 on a 10-point scale compared to 5.1 for adults. (APA survey)
- 10-20% of children and adolescents are diagnosed with a serious mental illness. (World Health Organization)
- In the last 6-7 years there has been an unprecedented spike in anxiety and depression in adolescents. (The Self-Driven Child, Stixrud, PhD)

Stress and Trauma in Students

Stress/Trauma can cause:

- Irritability
- Angry/aggressive behavior
- Difficulty regulating emotions
- Too much or too little sleep
- Overeat or loss of appetite
- Difficulty focusing and concentrating
- Retreat/depression
- Frequent or unusual illness

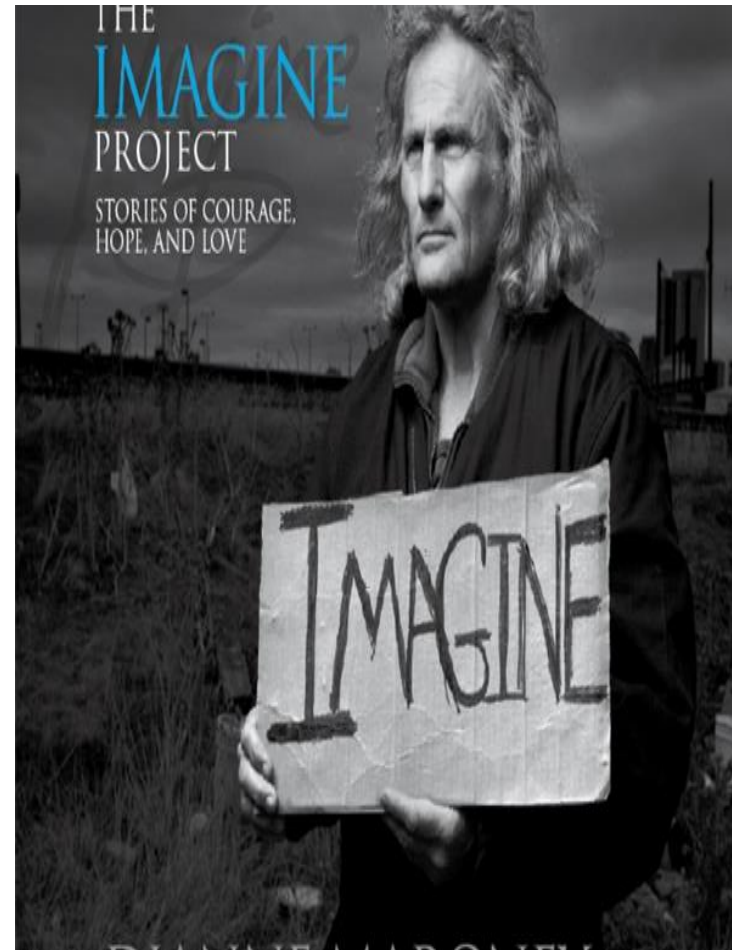
Expressive Writing Research

Expressive Writing Research

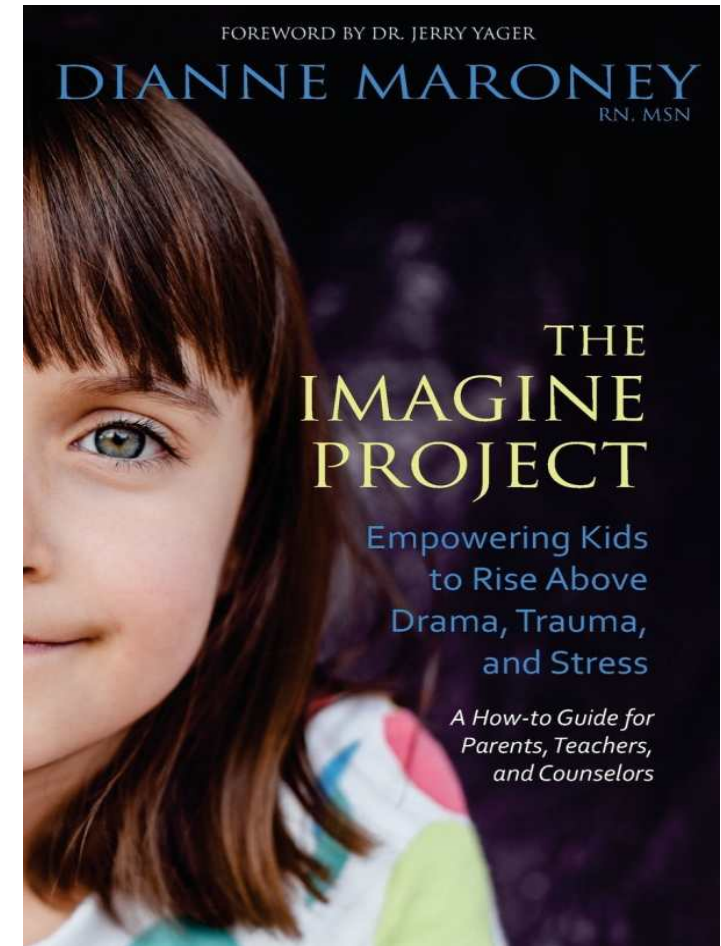
- Improves grade point average
- Improves working memory
- Decreases dropout rates
- Improves writing skills
- Decreases anxiety and depression
- Lessens post-trauma intrusion and avoidance symptoms
- Enhances immune function, decreases blood pressure

The Imagine Project

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<https://youtu.be/h-dHixcQ1IY>



<https://youtu.be/Lkz82Jn-CTg>

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**The Imagine
Project**
is an expressive
writing activity
that helps
students
process stress
and trauma.

***The
Imagine
Project
7-Step
Process***

Step 1: Celebrate

Step 2: Reflect

Step 3: Imagine

Step 4: Possibilities

Step 5: I am, I can, I will!

Step 6: Do

Step 7: 30 Day Imagine Challenge

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Use in classrooms, groups, or individually:

- Use as an activity that is part of your literacy curriculum
- Younger kids will need more time to write—over a 1-2 week period. Older kids will take less time
- Leave plenty of time for sharing especially in grade school,
- Opportunity to teach compassion, find friends, and develop trust.

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Feedback from Teachers:

- Improves writing
- Creates friendships, bonding, and trust in the classroom
- Gives students a life long tool to support their emotional needs (for free)
- Strengthens your relationship with the child
- Focuses on what's possible in life