



# FOCUS

FALL 2010

## Raising Your Spiritual Consciousness

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In our day to day lives we often pay little attention to how our actions are impacting those around us. Recognizing where our consciousness lies may be the missing link in making a more positive impact on the world and moving forward towards a more fulfilling life.

The concept of spiritual consciousness can be attributed to a ladder. Those whose main concern is their own basic survival without any notice to those around them would be on a lower rung on that ladder. Those who are so spiritually enlightened that they have overcome their own obstacles in order to serve others would be on towards the top of the ladder. In between these polar opposites lies the vast majority of the population.

Our ability to move upward on this ladder and towards a better life depends greatly on how we interact with others. How would you answer these questions:

- Are you able to see the good in even the most difficult people?
- Do you go out of your way to help those who need it the most?
- Do you have the ability to recognize when your works or actions have negatively impacted those around you?

By addressing these issues we are able to move into a place of greater spiritual awareness and overall contentment with the world we live in. most people find that after abandoning judgment of those around them and embracing the positive they are able to reconnect with the positive in themselves and in their own lives.

Start small. Reach out to the co-worker with whom you have always had negative interactions. Check in with a friend who has been going through a rough time. Make a list of how you

could make your spouse's life easier or more enjoyable. Take the time to read a book with your child. Not only will these small things brighten the day of those around you, but they will increase your spiritual consciousness and overall awareness of the world.

While the world may seem like a massive place, each of us alone has the power to touch those around us. If your level of spiritual consciousness has kept you from doing so in a positive way then reach for something better. Move up the ladder to higher spiritual awareness and watch the way your life can change.

If you would like to read more about the various levels of spiritual consciousness you can do so here: <http://bit.ly/b4mzzw>.

Source:

ItsAllAboutWomen.com  
July 12, 2010

Welcome to the newest members of our clinical staff !

**Sally Bernard,**  
M.A., LICDC, LPC, NCAC

**Stephanie Bradford,**  
MSSA, ACSW, LISW-S  
NASW Diplomat in  
Clinical Social Work

**Kim Kroh,**  
M.A., LPCC-S

**Patricia Sacha,**  
M.Ed., LPCC

**Terri Simmons-Bentzel,**  
M.A., LPC

## Parent Involvement In School

It's rather typical. As children progress from kindergarten through high school, parents' involvement declines and we distance ourselves from school. After all, our children are supposed to become independent, right?

The truth is that kids need their parents to remain involved throughout their academics years. According to Search Institute, youth are more likely to grow up healthy when their parents are involved in their education and school.

Yet only 34% of young people experience parent involvement. This rate drops drastically from during middle and high school years, from 50% of 6th graders having parental involvement to only 20% of 12th graders. (See page 2)

# Parent Involvement In School

(Continued from cover.) Parents can make a big difference by staying involved even in small ways. For example:

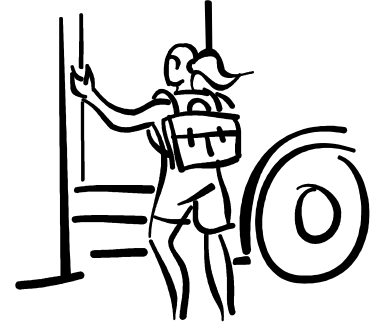
- Maintain ongoing communication with your child's teacher(s). Call periodically to check on your child's performance before trouble appears. Many schools use email so keeping in touch is easy.
- Join a parent-teacher organization. If you can't volunteer a lot of your time, be clear about your availability.
- Help seniors complete college applications.
- Offer to speak on career day.
- Attend all conferences when possible.
- Read the same book your child is assigned

in English class, and discuss it together.

The U.S. Department of Education has available a number of free publications on family involvement in learning. Check out the website at [www.ed.gov](http://www.ed.gov).

Source:

Search Institute  
[www.search-institute.org](http://www.search-institute.org)  
800.888.7828



## How (Not) To Wreck Your Life

Not a day goes by when Dr. Joy Browne, noted psychologist, author and host of a nationally syndicated talk show, doesn't hear about the terrible things that happen in people's lives—and after all these years, she has noticed that all too commonly, they have themselves to blame. Here is her analysis of the seven most common self-sabotaging behaviors that lead people to wreck their own lives.

**Blaming someone for a problem** keeps you stuck in the past and weakens your power over the situation. Accepting responsibility allows you to figure out what happened—and how not to have it happen again.

**Turning challenges into obstacles.** Living through a job loss or family crisis is no picnic—but pessimistic thinking deters positive action. A “woe is me” atti-

tude is a variation on this trip.

**Not listening to others** can wreck relationships and lock you into an unhelpful perspective. Some people are so defensive or egotistical that they reject any input—even when it concerns such important issues as keeping a job or finding a new one. **Better:** genuinely listen to what other people have to say, and then take the time to think about it. If the shoe fits, wear it. Otherwise, throw it away.

**Using absolutes**, such as “never” and “always.” They tend to lock in your thinking and don't endear you to other people by completely stifling open, honest communication.

**Not communicating needs and feelings.** Dr. Joy doesn't believe in what she calls the Soul-Mate School of Life. (“If you

really loved me, you would know what I want.”) Speak up!

**Going for the jugular.** Winning isn't everything, especially over the long term. Kindness and generosity make for truly fulfilling lives.

**Trying to be in control of all situations** at all times. No one can do everything...and “everything” can't be your top priority.

Source:

**Bottom Line/Personal** interviewed Joy Browne, PhD, a clinical psychologist in New York City. Her internationally syndicated call-in radio show, *The Dr. Joy Browne Show*, is the longest-running of its kind ([www.drjoy.com](http://www.drjoy.com)). She is the author of many books, including *Getting Unstuck: 8 Simple Steps to Solving Any Problem* (Hay House).

If the shoe fits, wear it. Otherwise, throw it away.

# A Guide To Video Game Addiction

What are the symptoms of video game addiction? The behaviors most often reported include:

For kids

- Spending non-school hours on the computer or playing video games.
- Falling asleep in school.
- Not keeping up with assignments.
- Worsening grades.
- Lying about computer or video game use.
- Choosing to use the computer or play video games rather than see friends.
- Dropping out of social groups (such as clubs or sports) in order to play games.
- Stealing money in order to buy or play games.

- Irritability when not playing a video game or on the computer.
- Unsuccessful attempt to cut back on game play.

For adults

- Computer or video game use is characterized by intense feelings of pleasure and guilt.
- Obsessing and pre-occupation about being on the computer, even when not connected.
- Hours playing video games or on the computer increasing, seriously disrupting family, social or even work life.
- Lying about computer or video game use.
- Feelings of withdrawal, anger, or depression when not on the com-

puter or playing video games.

- Incurring large phone or credit bills for online services.
- Inability to control computer or video game use.
- Fantasy life online replacing emotional life with partner.

Physical symptoms of addiction

- Carpal tunnel syndrome or other repetitive stress injuries
- Sleep disturbance
- Back or neck aches
- Headaches
- Dry eyes
- Failure to eat regularly
- Neglect of personal hygiene



The content on this page has been provide as a free download on **ParentFurther.com**, an online resource from **Search Institute**, Minneapolis, MN, 800.888.7828  
[www.search-institute.org](http://www.search-institute.org)

## Preventing Video Game Addiction

Parent-child arguments about video and computer games are part of the 21st century parenting, so don't panic if you have had your share of these arguments. On the other hand, don't ignore signs of a real problem with pathological game-playing. Here are some tips to make sure computer and video game playing remains a positive part of your children's lives.

- Set clear rules about when, where, how much, and what kind of game playing is al-

lowed as soon as your child starts to play games.

- Limit video game playing time.
- Have clear consequences if time limits are not observed.
- Enforce consequences consistently.
- Make sure your child is not playing in the middle of the night.
- Require that homework and other chores be

completed before game play.

- Keep video and computer games out of your child's bedroom.
- If your child refuses to cooperate, restrict access to video games for a period of time.
- Be clear with your child that constant arguments about game playing will result in loss of game playing privileges.

- Open lines of communication with your child. Is game play a result of insecurities in other areas? Are there underlying issues?
- Encourage other activities. Have younger children help make a list of "Fun Things to Do" and try a new thing every day.
- Use existing tools and resources to help you establish healthy media habits.



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Our FOCUS is on you  
by offering the very best in psychological and  
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achieve greater emotional wellness and adjustment  
by providing individual, child and adolescent, couples,  
and family therapy.

We are available to you Monday thru Saturday  
with day and evening hours for your convenience.

## 1 TEXT = 1000 WORDS

The appeal of owning 100 Silly Bandz may be lost on the parent of tweens and teens these days. But there's one fad that parents and kids can agree on: texting.

According to a 2010 Pew Research Center study, 75 percent of teenagers own cell phones and texting is their preferred form of communication. And some of those LOL's are buzzing right into their parents' hands. The study explains, "71 percent of cell-phone owning parents of teens 12-17 say they send and receive text messages on their cell phones."

"My parents text me all the time," says 17 year -old Alexander Corwin from Manhattan. "It's just the most convenient way to stay in touch." Sometimes, it simply saves his parents a yell. "The other day I had a bunch of friends over and when I looked down at my phone I had a

BBM from my mom saying 'keep it down!'"

For Arthur Hyland, 50, of Vienna, Virginia, texting with his daughters—Katie, 15, and Susie, 12— is a daily pick-me-up. "I will send a message...just to say 'hi' and that I'm thinking about them." It's nice that they are sharing what they are doing with their Dad."

The message reads loud and clear—a txt is worth 1000 words.

Consider the benefits of texting:

- They're great for coordinating drop-offs and pick-ups.
- Simple messages like, "Walk the dog when you get home," or "Be home by 6pm" are relayed quickly and clearly.
- Sending photos is a great way to engage your kids. If you're

on a business trip or just out and about and see something funny or interesting, send a snapshot. It will give you something to laugh about later and let them know that you are in tune with their interests.



Source: Better Homes and Gardens. Meredith Corp., 1716 Locust, Des Moines, IA 50309