Personal discussion: Mental health

**Important tip #1:** Have fun! **Important tip #2:** Listen respectfully. **Tip #3:** It’s ok if you don’t have time to do ALL the questions.

# Discussion questions

1. How much money would you have to make annually for you to not be stressed about finances? Why did you choose this amount?
2. Studies have shown that when people are asked question 1, they tend to choose an amount that is equal to two and a half times their current salary, no matter how big that salary is. What does this show you about money and satisfaction?
3. Learning is one thing Elizabeth Scott identifies as a contributing factor to happiness. Do you regularly try to learn new skills, apart from school? Explain.
4. Scott says accepting yourself as you are, in other words, having good self-esteem, helps you to be happy. In contrast, Jordan Peterson contends that the self-esteem movement is misguided and often results in people not making needed changes to their lives, even if their lives are a mess. Which point of view do you side with more? Why?
5. Chelsea Fagan draws our attention to the way anxiety and personal finances are closely related. Have you ever noticed a connection between these anxiety and money? Explain.
6. Chelsea recounts how she would use ‘retail therapy’ during periods of acute anxiety, only to later regret her spending. Have you, or someone you know, ever spent money unwisely as a result of anxiety? Explain.
7. Chelsea’s tips for dealing with anxiety are: be honest, confront issues, do things that scare you, and take preventative steps. Have you found any of these ideas to be helpful? Do you have other ways of controlling anxiety? Explain.
8. Johann Hari argues that humans are made to be seen, and that a conversation with someone via a screen will leave us feeling less satisfied than a real-life chat. Has this been your experience as well, especially in the last six months? Explain.
9. Hari contends that video games are an example of people trying to replace lost things such as belonging to a tribe, gaining status, and moving around outdoors. He argues that this replacement is ‘hollow’ and that we need to try to get back to the real things. Do you agree with his assessment of video games? If so, how can we ‘get back to the real things’?
10. Hari explains that advertising works by first making us feel inadequate, and then making us buy the solution. Watch and explain the following ad, using Hari’s idea about advertising: YouTube key words ‘Old Spice smell like a man’ or URL: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=owGykVbfgUE&ab_channel=OldSpice>
11. Joey Schweitzer contrasts ‘real life’ with the ‘highlight reel’ we see on social media and in movies. Do you ever feel that your own life is boring because it doesn’t have nearly as much excitement as what we perceive in the lives of others? Explain.
12. What do you think of Joey’s advice to see life on a micro-level of 16-hour episodes? Will this perspective ‘help bring clarity to the little choices that you make throughout the day’ such as getting together with friends or going to the gym?