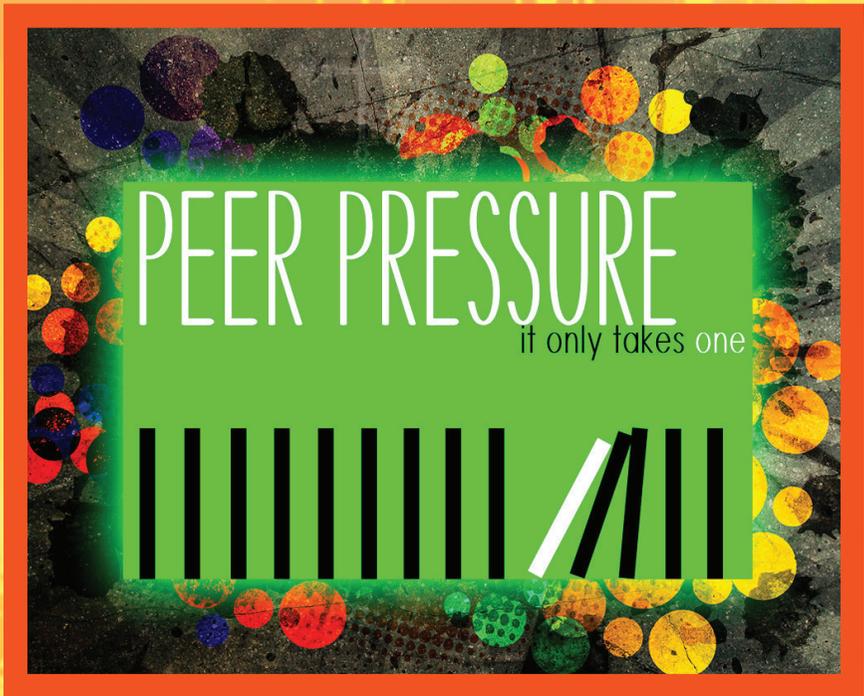


# Peer Pressure



*Teens Can Dream*

Peer Pressure

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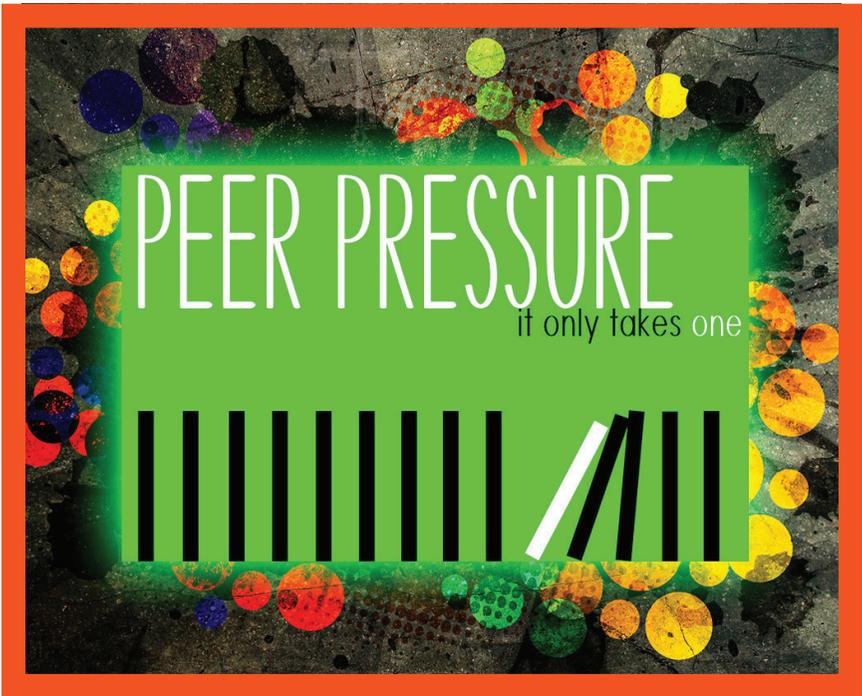
Teens Can Dream is a company dedicated in helping teens, preteens and young adults gain inspiration and knowledge on how to navigate through this stressful, fast moving world. With short stories, audios, positive affirmations and books on multiple topics, as well as chat rooms and Q&A, we are confident there is something for everyone. Visit our site at:

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to see if we can help YOU  
**unlock your true potential.**



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**Warning:** The information you are about to read can dramatically decrease your tendency to fold under peer pressure and enhance many other areas of your life according to the level of your belief. So, if you truly want to minimize the forces of peer pressure, which will help propel you in the future, read this article multiple times until you have it virtually memorized.



**A**s most all of you teenagers already know, being a teenager can be very difficult. With all the hormone changes, physical body changes, transitions from elementary to middle school and middle school to high school, relationship difficulties, friend troubles (and efforts to find the group you fit into), and the many other challenges teens face, it's no wonder life can be stressful for teenagers. What can and does add to the difficulty during this time in your life is whether or not you're growing up in a home with support. There are too many cases in which the parents are absent in the teen's life. Maybe there's only one parent who has to work; maybe no parents are around, so you're in the care of grandparents or foster parents. Regardless of what your situation is in your life right now, my objective is to teach you how to make it better. I realize you don't have many places to go and be taught how to create the life you want. So, that's why I've written these short stories and books and created the web site, [www.teenscandream.com](http://www.teenscandream.com). Trust me, if you follow

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what I tell you to do and continue to research more information, you will be amazed how your life unfolds before your very eyes.

So, let's talk about peer pressure. What does it really mean? If you look it up in Webster's dictionary, you'll find the definition: a feeling that you must do the same things as other people of your age and social group in order to be liked or respected by them. I'm guessing most all of you who read that said, "yep, that about sums it up." When you read this, you might think the peer pressure is a bad thing because at times it can be. But, peer pressure can also be a good thing that helps one to grow. We'll break this down shortly.

Science says the brain isn't fully developed until about the age of 25. So, during their youth, teens and young adults might make decisions and afterwards might not be able to explain why they made that decision. Having said that, you don't want to use this science as an excuse or a crutch to argue your way out of a disciplinary action after making a bad choice. But, you do want to understand this science so it helps you think twice when deciding to do something that may not feel quite right. As you learn to think more about situations you're confronted with, instead of just jumping right in, you'll build more self-confidence,

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which will help you in not falling victim to peer pressure that may have negative consequences.

When we take a look at scenarios that deal with negative peer pressure, we can come up with things like drinking alcohol, taking drugs, stealing, vandalizing, engaging in sex, manipulating others, lying, as well as many other situations. The question is, “Why?” Why do we listen to others and do things we wouldn’t normally do or especially do on our own? The answer is simple: we want to fit in. We want to feel like we are part of the group. We want to be a part of something bigger than ourselves. I think at times, most all of us fall victim to peer pressure. Thankfully, most of us learn from our mistakes and don’t continue to repeat them over and over. Unfortunately though, there are some who get caught up in the thrill and go down the path of self-destruction. Falling victim to peer pressure typically happens when one has little self-confidence. Maybe you came from a small middle school and have entered into a large high school. Or, maybe you moved from a small town to a big city. It could be that your parents are in the military and move all the time, which has prevented you from putting roots down in any one location. In some cases, it could be because you haven’t had your growth spurt and most of your friends have. The list of why’s is virtually limitless

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because everyone has their own story. But, if we could just learn a little more about ourselves, about how the mind works, and about other people, we can build confidence that will then help us minimize the effects of peer pressure.

What seems to help many people is knowing that you're not alone. You should realize that most of your peers fall victim to peer pressure as well. Many teens ask, "Why do I let this happen to me? My friends seem to have confidence. My parents have confidence. What's wrong with me?" First, let me say that it's not always an easy question to answer. It can be simply in your individual nature to be more sensitive or susceptible to peer pressure. Second, there is nothing wrong with you. You have to get that out of your head right now. If you don't, you can sabotage your future. Confidence is a learned behavior. If you have parents who are more introverted or shy, that is what you've learned as a toddler, child, and now teenager. If you have extroverted or outgoing parents, then that is what you've learned since birth as well. Regardless of your upbringing or situation in life, I'm going to show you how to focus your thoughts in one direction and help build that confidence.

As I mentioned earlier, most everyone submits to peer pressure because they want to fit into a particular

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group of people. Unfortunately, in many cases, the people who are doing the pressuring, those you want to be friends with, are typically just as confused as you are. They also lack confidence, but they've learned to enjoy the power over someone else--that same power that others had on them before they were granted safety among the group. What nobody realizes is that although the person pressuring you may have experienced the same thing he or she is trying to get you to do and was never caught, there is no guarantee you are not going to be caught. But, because he was never caught, his assumption may be that it's safe to do and therefore puts even more pressure on you. The truth is that it's just a grab for power. People like power over others. You just need to remember this so when you're in a situation of peer pressure in the future, you can recall this information and it will give you the confidence needed to prevent you from making a mistake, which could have huge consequences. I have seen kids get kicked out of school in their senior year because of allowing peer pressure to get the best of them. I've seen others lose college scholarships, go to jail, get kicked out of their homes or not be allowed to play sports because they allowed peer pressure to get the best of them. The irony is, in many cases, the person doing the pressuring doesn't have the guts to

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do himself whatever it is he wants you to do. Why? Because he lacks confidence, too, and he doesn't want to get in trouble.

We have to focus our thoughts in one direction if we want to change who we are and learn to feel confident. So, what does that mean? That means you have to focus on what you truly want in life and who you want to be as a person. Fear is the root of the problem when it comes to confidence. You might fear not being accepted in this group if you don't do what they say. You might fear having no friends if you don't follow along. You might fear being alone at this big school if you don't get along with this group. Regardless of what your "fear" is about, I'm going to help you reverse this. I can tell you that I learned this technique years ago from a friend of mine and I have used it countless times in business and in personal situations. I'm not a fan of reinventing the wheel. When I find something that works, I use it.

Think of fear as an acronym. F.E.A.R. = False Evidence Appearing Real. Regardless of not yet feeling confident, you have to focus your thoughts constructively on what you **want** to happen and not on what you **don't** want to happen. What I mean is that you want to focus on finding the "right" group of friends, not just the popular group. The so-called

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popular group may jeopardize your future. You want to feel good, be happy, and enjoy life. To do that, you need friends that think like you do. If you try to force yourself into a certain group of people without truly understanding what they represent, you could very well find yourself in the wrong group, doing things you don't really want to do.

As I mentioned earlier, most of your peers are searching for the same thing you are: the right friends and happiness. F.E.A.R gets in the way because it clouds our judgment. We sometimes feel we have to succumb to the pressure for fear this group of people won't like us. Strangely, the person doing the pressuring typically does not have confidence either, but to the peer group it appears that he's very confident. Ironically, when someone stands up for himself or herself and exudes confidence, a shift typically takes place among the group doing the pressuring. At this point, many in the group are surprised to find out that this person has confidence and the ability to stand up to peer pressure. They want what this person has, and a power shift begins to take place as many in the group give respect to this person instead of the ones who were previously doing the pressuring. It could very well be that this person, new to the group, has never stood up to peer pressure before. But, this group

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doesn't know that, so they think that this person is amazingly strong and a new leader is born.

Let's take a look at how peer pressure can be a good thing because there are many cases in which this is true. What if someone was pressuring you to try out for a team because they believed in you more than you believed in yourself? Maybe it's a new position in your current sport--one that you are not comfortable with. Or it could be that you are being pushed into trying robotics, music, art, theatre, or community involvement. Whatever it may be, typically when we are pressured into a positive direction, it's because our friends, teachers or family members believe it's something we would be good at. There are countless stories out there in which if it weren't for people pushing others, those people would not have accomplished what they accomplished. Take me for instance. I've been a businessman for most of my life. I was never a writer. But I was pushed by others and now I write almost every day. On a lighter note, when we were on a family vacation, I took the kids zip lining. My daughter was scared to death and I almost allowed her to back off and not do it. But, we were with our friends and our friends pushed my daughter to do it as I sat back and didn't say a word. My daughter cried while zipping over the jungle. But guess what? She did it.

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Three years later we went zip lining again and guess who couldn't get enough? That's right; my daughter. So, peer pressure can be good for us so we don't stay complacent in our comfortable selves. Most human beings need to be pushed out of their comfort zones; when they are, magical things can happen. Books are written, businesses are created, products are invented and scientists find cures for diseases.

It's important to understand the contrast between good peer pressure and bad peer pressure. As you understand this, it will make it easier to differentiate the two when you are put in a peer pressure situation. You'll have better instincts, which you'll need to listen to when it comes to negative peer pressure. Never go against these instincts. If you do, you'll have a much higher chance of putting yourself in a negative situation, which will have direct negative consequences. Don't allow F.E.A.R. to take advantage of you. When this F.E.A.R. creeps into your mind, you need to recognize it and talk to yourself. Just say things like, "Oh, no you don't." This is just false evidence appearing real. This is a joke. You don't control me. I control me."

The best part is that anyone can learn this thinking stuff, but like anything else it takes practice. Just like the many hours of practice one would put into sports, or the time spent studying, you are also going

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to have to practice this “thinking stuff.” If you choose not to, you may fall into the trap so many people fall into, and that is of creating a life less than the life you or anyone else deserves. Trust me, if you learn this now, this thinking stuff can carry you into the future and unfold a life you could only dream of.

So why don't we already know this stuff? Why didn't my parents teach me this stuff? It seems so easy. Well, the simple truth is that they were not taught themselves. Our “habitual thinking habits” are a learned behavior. Keep in mind there are exceptions to the rule, but for most, the pattern of behavior was learned from a young age. Regardless of where or how the behavior was learned, it's important just to know that most likely they themselves were raised the same way they are raising you. Think about it; people can only teach others what they themselves have been taught. In other words, if your parents have no knowledge of how to think in this manner, then how could they possibly teach it to you?

The truth is, I'm writing this for you, the teen. What I'm trying to teach you in this article is to understand how the magic of life works. Your thoughts end up forming your future. Nothing can happen without thought first. The trick here is using your thoughts constructively instead of destructively. As you practice

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changing your thinking habits, you will realize that this will be one of the most important things you're going to learn in your life. The goal is to focus your thoughts in one direction.

I'm going to end this with an affirmation. An affirmation is somewhat like a prayer, but you are "affirming" that which you desire is actually already in your possession.

You should say your affirmation multiple times a day--first thing in the morning, a couple times during the day and then especially at night just before falling asleep, while lying in bed. This is the last thing you want to be thinking about prior to falling asleep.

## **Affirmation**

Thank you, God, for my perfect body. It is wonderful having such perfection, which you have so graciously given to me. Thank you for my wonderful home. Thank you for my family. Thank you for my life. Thank you for my strength. It feels wonderful having such confidence. I love raising my hand and contributing in class. I enjoy having so many incredible friends who support each other. It's fantastic to have such confidence and it feels great to know I can

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do anything I put my mind to. It's incredible to feel comfortable being who it is I want to be and It's wonderful having the confidence to stand up to others. I'm so happy to know that you have given me all the tools necessary to be successful in life. Thank you, thank you, thank you.

This affirmation is much shorter than what I use. But, it's a start, and you can add things as you get it memorized. I've used certain words on purpose because some of the words such as "feel," "love," "thrill," "amazing," and "incredible" are words that generate feelings. When you say affirmations, you want to say them with feeling. If all one does is repeat the words, it won't work. You have to instill a sense of strong feelings with a belief of already having that which you desire. You're tricking your mind into thinking you already have confidence, and you can only do that by *feeling* that you indeed are confident now. In addition, the way God created this world was to reward those who are grateful for anything and everything they have right now, and although at times it may appear that the constant complainer or negative person gets rewarded, chaos will eventually strike. Your job is to not concern yourself with when or how. Just focus on what **you** want and never focus on the negative people. As I explained earlier,

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like thoughts attract like things. Therefore, the grateful person attracts more happiness in his or her life and of course the ingrate or the complainer will constantly attract misery in his or her life.

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**Note from the author:** Please understand that this is a very short condensed story on how to change your thinking habits and improve your life. To get a deeper understanding on how to make your life better, I would suggest listening to many of the other short stories we have and reading my book, [Thinking In One Direction](#), as well as constantly looking at our site, [www.teenscandream.com](http://www.teenscandream.com). The more you do this research and these exercises, and the deeper you learn, the faster and more permanent the changes can occur. When it comes to the mind, this thinking stuff will work according to **your** level of belief. It's your life so treat it as if there is nothing more important than making it better. Not only will you be happier, but everyone you touch throughout your life will be better for knowing you.

Confidential:

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