

June 2021

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A message from our director

“We’re putting the Band back together”

Yes, you heard it right! Critical Agendas is bringing back the face-to-face Conference format.

On the 26th & 27th August 2021, Critical Agendas will be hosting the 2021 National Mental Health Conference at The Moonee Valley Racecourse, Melbourne. We will have a wide array of A-grade presenters eager to mingle, interact and inform you of the latest strategies to improve our student’s mental health. As with all Critical Agendas Conferences, there will be fantastic food, brilliant ambience, fun -filled networking opportunities, a host of prizes and giveaways and maybe even a tippie or two at the end of the day to unwind.

The link below takes you straight to the event brochure and all bookings can be made on-line.

[Developing, Nurturing and Leading the Way - Mental Health Conference](#)

It is never too early to book your place, as the venue still requires Co-vid 19 compliance. Therefore, numbers will have to be capped for this two-day event.

For those of you who live interstate, you are also most welcome to attend. Should you not want to fly to Victoria, you still have the ability to view this two-day event in webinar format from wherever you may be. Please note pricing is reduced for those participants who chose this option.

*As I sign off, please remember,
“If you only go to one Professional Development Conference in 2021, this is the must attend.*

See you at Moonee Valley in August!

Stay safe and well,

*Rick Vagnoni
Director
Critical Agendas*

Greg Mitchell



If you would Greg Mitchell or any of our other amazing presenters to come to your school, simply e-mail admin@criticalagendas.com.au and we will do the rest!

From the Presenters Desk

This month I am leaving home! - Greg Mitchell

No, I haven't broken up with the beautiful Kate, nor have I fallen victim to a very delayed midlife crisis but instead Kate and I are leaving Perth and are relocating to the Eastern states and intend to spend our life between Brisbane and Melbourne... a kind of dual citizenship, if you like. This is an exercise in doing what the ancient stoics call "Focusing on what you can control".

For the last twenty years I have spent thousands of hours flying from Perth to the Eastern states, spending weeks away from home and family, dragging my tired sorry body home on the Friday redeye special to see Kate and the kids. Now the kids have grown up and the real estate market is in our favour, so we have decided to move closer to where the majority of my work is or promises to be.

During the dark days of Kate's cancer treatment, I found myself turning more and more towards the works of the ancient stoic philosophers who have a concept called "MOMENTO MORI" which simply means, remember that you are going to die!

This doesn't seem a cheery idea on first blush, but it points to the need to realise that life is now, this instant, this breath, this second and you need to make the most of it!

So, Kate and I are taking a chance and are starting over again, in a new city or two, more time together, less time in aeroplanes, more time enjoying this last day, more time to learn and share. More time to love each other and to love life.

The stoics were archaic dudes from ancient Greece and Rome, who had a number of really cool ideas on how to cope with life's ups and downs and I categorically believe that their ideas, with a gender realignment and a modern social adjustment, would make a brilliant curriculum for students of all ages but especially in the early teen years of middle school.

1. **Focus on what you can control** - This is the antidote to anxiety I believe. It means catching that runaway mind of yours before it relives the past again or anticipates a future of pain and anguish and be right here, this moment this instant and enjoy doing what you are doing.
2. **Do good to feel good** - This is a rule for true happiness. Smile, help, give, love, and the world will smile, help, give you the love you need back.
3. **Journal** - Write stuff down about what you are doing and how you dealt with today's ups and downs, debrief, and complete your day and then you can move on.

4. **Take a walk** - I am a complete walkaholic you have no idea how many times I solve a problem, design a better week, and deal with anguish simply by walking up a hill and letting my mind relax.
5. **Do less** - but do it well. This is one of Finnish education's secret weapons, "Less is more" give yourself more time to solve a problem rather than cramming in quick fixes that confuse.
6. **Take the time to be grateful** - Thank people. I make sure that several times a day I thank Kate for all of the simple great things that she does for me each day. Thank your students today and see how they respond.
7. **Connect with others** - We are the most connected generation of all time and yet we have a loneliness pandemic particularly amongst our teens. Say "hi." Greet and engage. It could be your hidden superpower.
8. **Exercise strenuously** - Would you believe my most strenuous exercise on a regular basis is gardening. I am going to miss my garden like a good friend, but I intend to reacquaint myself with the pool. Find the place that raises your heart rate and learn to love it.
9. **Laugh** - One of the greatest contributors to resilience is humour. Learning to laugh again.
10. **Let go of worry, anxiety, and regret** - Learn to "hold the space". Just stop and breathe when you are down, watch how these emotions dance and play around your body lassoed by your Vagus nerve and when they are annoying, you just sing out loud the chorus from Irving Berlin's "There's No Business Like Show Business" and they will go! (Please note that "vigour" is the measure of success here not being on key!)
11. **Realize: you have everything you need.** The great thing about shifting house is that you get rid of all of those possessions that own you, the stuff that you have kept because you used it ten years ago twice and have never used again! The clothes that don't fit, the fridge you always hated and the portable air conditioner that was good once but now can hardly give a puff.

So, join us on the adventure.

If your school is in Victoria and Queensland know that I am nearby and ready for adventure and if you are in NSW, Tasmania, NT, and South Australia remember that you now have new next-door neighbors who would love to visit. And Western Australia give us a call so I can get back to see the kids.

Get us out to your school to look at how we can all love life a little more, enjoy our work and do good to feel good together.

Stay Awesomely awesome,

Yours Greg

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Upcoming Term 2 Webinars

- 08/06/2021 [Confidently Dealing with Power Struggles in the Classroom](#)
- 08/06/2021 [From tried and true to brand new: successful activities for Language classes](#)
- 09/06/2021 [How to be an effective leader in schools](#)
- 09/06/2021 [Attitudes, activities and assessments that move 'Beyond the text response essay!'](#)
- 10/06/2021 [Are you struggling to engage middle school students in the maths classroom?](#)
- 10/06/2021 [Managing and Responding to Extreme Behaviours](#)
- 11/06/2021 [Making Maths Dyslexia Friendly](#)
- 15/06/2021 [Smart ways to improve student learning, reduce teacher workload and minimise stress!](#)
- 15/06/2021 [Building Classroom Discipline in the Wake of New Challenges](#)
- 16/06/2021 [Differentiators Mindset for Difficult to Teach Classes](#)
- 16/06/2021 [Systematic Synthetic Phonics](#)
- 17/06/2021 [The Art of Giving Feedback in English classes from 7-12](#)
- 17/06/2021 [Making Writing a more enjoyable activity for Language students and their teachers](#)
- 18/06/2021 [Easy Wins with Technology](#)
- 18/06/2021 [Creating Purposeful Individual Education Plans](#)
- 21/06/2021 [Leading the Management of Students](#)
- 21/06/2021 [How to get the best language students you possible can](#)
- 22/06/2021 [Spelling Made Easier](#)
- 22/06/2021 [Emotional Intelligence: The Secret to Superior Leadership](#)

***All Term 3 Programs are now also available
on our website***

You can register at www.criticalagendas.com.au