

TEDx Totnes

x = independently organized TED event

So ... what is TED?

TED is a not-for-profit organisation devoted to spreading ideas, usually in the form of short, powerful talks (18 minutes or less). TED began with a conference in 1984 in the U.S.A.

In the spirit of ideas worth spreading, TED has created TEDx. TEDx is a programme of local, self-organized events that bring people together to share a TED-like experience.

In that case ... what does TEDx do locally?

The second TEDxTotnes event was once again about the community in and around Totnes. It represented local individuals and their aspirations and ideas. TED Talks video and live speakers combined to spark deep discussion and connection in a small group.

The International TED Conference provides general guidance for the TEDx program.



TEDx Live stream to KEVICC

The theme of the second TEDx event in May at Dartington was CHANGE.

What does change mean to you? It can evoke excitement in some and strike fear into others. Change in our world appears to be accelerating whether it's technology, science or politics – locally and globally.

KEVICC were offered the opportunity to suggest topics in advance for the talks, and also to have the day's talks live-streamed into our Theatre. We were delighted to be involved.

Ben Cotton, Assistant Principal, said:

TEDx Totnes was a phenomenal success here at KEVICC. The live-streamed event was watched by over 500 students over the course of the day.

Our students were inspired, provoked and challenged. It was also a fantastic opportunity to strengthen our links within our vibrant community'

Four of our students give their reflections on some of the talks and speakers, showing how it engaged them and that it led them to new ways of thinking. With opposing views on one of the topics, this could well lead on to a debate between them.

TEDx organiser and licensee Gillian Healey said: *This is fantastic and exactly what we hoped the TEDx would do in the community.*



JAKE COLE ~ DRUMMING OUT DEPRESSION. A TOOL FOR SMASHING LIFE.

Your hobby is a tool for smashing life. Who says life has to be played by the rules? Learn how to discover your passion, meet your psychological needs, earn money and live a life that genuinely excites and inspires you through a central hobby. A talk with a twist.

Jake Cole's Tedx talk about his depression, the anxiety he has faced in the past and how he overcame it, really inspired me. The way he presented it shows that, even though it is hard, depression can be dealt with. Also, I thought that it was nice how he shared his current passions with the audience – by sharing this, he reached out to the people listening. The way he spoke was very friendly – this made it very easy to connect

with, and understand, his thoughts. His talk was targeting teens and people who may be having a difficult time; the message he conveyed was one of a very positive outlook – things can change for the better.

Jasmine Leete, Year 10

SAIF ALI ~ FROM SEEKING ASYLUM TO SEEKING PURPOSE

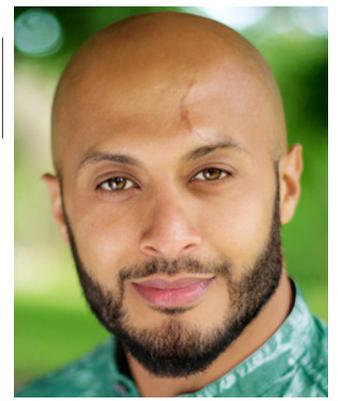
Reflecting on his own 18-year journey of seeking asylum, Saif Ali shines a light on how shifting our perception towards displacement can help turn adversity into a birthplace for a re-found authenticity and purpose.

Some students got the opportunity to watch the Ted Talks that were on in the Theatre. Each hour had three different talks with different messages to be taken from each.

The talk I found most interesting was the one by Saif Ali, an Iraqi refugee. He spoke of the awful conflict he had witnessed in his home country, and his problems trying to get status as an asylum seeker in Britain. At the beginning he asked the people watching to put aside their prejudices and to listen to his talk without condemning him as a 'refugee'.

At the end he told us that our past experiences aren't our identities and that, while he may be a refugee, he is also a photographer, a film-maker and a charity worker. I really liked the points he made and how he explained what it is like to be an asylum seeker, which he did in a way that shows his individual experience. Most of the things we hear about refugees from the news makes us think of them almost as a group, not individuals with different thoughts and experiences, and it was good to hear about his life. I enjoyed the talks and I think it was a really good experience for all of us to hear about positivity and stress. I hope the school does more events like this, including another Ted Talk Day.

Maya Engwell, Year 10



WHY SOCIAL MEDIA MAKES US LESS SOCIAL AS TEENS ... opinion 1

I'm just a normal 14-year-old girl. I live in Totnes and I go to school at KEVICC. I have been asked to write an article to go in the paper but I don't know where to start. I have homework overdue and other things I need to do but instead I am sitting here struggling for words. What can I tell you that you don't already know? I don't know what to say; so I have decided to write about what is right in front of me. My iPhone.

I'm just a normal 14-year-old-girl. I love to dance and I am studying for my GCSEs; I am also a member of the Totnes kayaking club. That's me. I like maths and dance at school and you can usually find me at a dance class of one type or another in the evening. My life is pretty busy, but when I'm not revising or doing homework or dancing, I am probably on my phone. Scrolling through Instagram, Facebook, or Snapchatting my friends (I wouldn't want to lose my streaks). This drives my mom crazy. 'Get off your phone and engage with the real world,' is what she says. But, in all honesty, I think this is the real world. Through Instagram, I have learnt pretty much all I know about feminism, equality and politics. Through Facebook, I have been inspired to do what I love. Through Snapchat, I have been able to keep in contact with cousins who live as far away as both London and Australia. Yet I have just been sat in my bedroom, in a bus stop, in my English lesson.

I really believe that social media is the biggest tool and greatest platform we have - last week, I entered a contest to win a photo shoot with a famous New York based photographer. Yesterday, I read about a girl recovering from anorexia and tomorrow - who knows? Maybe I will discover a new passion that could lead me to my dream job? This tiny glass rectangle is a portal into the big, wide world. I may not be able to fly to Malaysia but I can watch the sunset there in real time, in my living room.

I get it - it is also good to go outside and speak to real people and, don't get me wrong, I know the dangers (possibly even better than some who warn me of them). I understand the risk of connecting with strangers, but I also realise the opportunities that it could bring. As long as we educate, and nurture, the use of social media, I think that it has the ability to bring people together and inspire us beyond what we think is possible. So perhaps instead of 'putting our phones down and engaging in the real world', we can pick our phones up and experience the real world together, in the comfort of our own homes.

Mia Poore, Year 10

WHY SOCIAL MEDIA MAKES US LESS SOCIAL AS TEENS ... opinion 2

Being a teenager, and living in a society where we are online for an average of 27 hours per week, is draining, even if we might not recognise it.

Of course not all of us are on our phones constantly, but it's easy to slip into a cycle of spending many hours and not realising the time we've lost. We want to fit in with our peers and what society tells us we should be but, with doing so, a feeling of insecurity is increased.

But why does it not feel like these hours are being spent tediously when our attention is absorbed into a 10cm block of metal? This stems from living in a society where we feel as though we are not good enough – we can end up competing with each other to get the better grades; to look the nicest, and it can become hard to appreciate others' qualities, as there's this strain to be exemplary. Another reason why social media is appealing to the younger generations is we're able to fabricate ourselves behind a phone; to become any person we aspire to be, and the online life we portray isn't always a celebration of what we are actually doing. Rather, it becomes more of a focus on how to achieve our ideal archetype set by unrealistic standards, for example the Kardashians.

We're focused on the external through using social media: what people are doing, what we should look like, and how our persona is perceived by others, instead of changing that so our focus is internal: thinking about our energies; where our creativity and interests lie.

This is all a very negative way to look at social media as there are multiple good qualities, such as that it allows us to be introduced to groups of people who have the same interests as us; we're able to share political messages; voice our opinions, and find role models with motivating messages. I just believe not all the time it is ideal to be bombarded with constant stimulation and ideas of what our lives should be. I also want a world where we want to be better than the people we're surrounded by. I think our generation needs to learn to be bored, so we can discover what our true passions are.

Iona Ogilvy-Stuart, Year 10

KING EDWARD VI COMMUNITY COLLEGE

6th Form Centre

& kennicott

contact us on t 01803 869200 or visit us at www.kingedwardvi.devon.sch.uk

King Edward VI Community College is a Co-operative Trust School

