

# My Amazing Challenge Digital Toolkit

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- Your Brain on Screens
- Other helpful resources from Cartwheel

**My Amazing Challenge** is presented by Cartwheel, inspired by *The Amazing Generation*.

## MY AMAZING CHALLENGE

Challenge Card

# My Amazing Challenge

The **My Amazing Challenge** is presented by Cartwheel, inspired by *The Amazing Generation*.



## You're a rebel. Now prove it.

You just read a book about what it looks like to grow up with more curiosity, more adventure, and more real-life connection. Now it's your turn to try something inspired by what you read. Then tell us about it.

## Your Challenge



### Read

*The Amazing Generation* at your own pace.



### Try

something the book inspired—a screen-free activity, a new hobby, time spent with someone in person, or a challenge that pushes you offline and into the real world.



### Share

your story with your family, teachers, and friends.

## The Prompt

**What did you do recently that you're proud of—and how did this book inspire it?**

Start with your Reset Plan—5 minutes, just for you, no wrong answers.

## MY AMAZING CHALLENGE

Activity

# My Screen-Free Reset Plan

A 5-Minute Exercise Before You Write, Draw, or Create

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Finished reading ***The Amazing Generation***? Before you tackle your Challenge, take a few minutes to think. There are no right answers here. Nobody sees this but you. Just be honest with yourself.

1. What's one thing from the book that surprised you or stuck with you?

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2. Because of this book, I tried:

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3. One habit I want to change:

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## MY AMAZING CHALLENGE

4. One thing I want to do more of when I'm not on a screen:

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5. One person I want to spend more time with in person this year:

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6. What did I do this recently that I'm proud of—and how did this book play a part in it?

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## MY AMAZING CHALLENGE

### Activity

# Discussion Sparks

Finished the book? Try talking about these with someone you trust.

The **My Amazing Challenge** is presented by Cartwheel, inspired by *The Amazing Generation*.

### A note from Dr. Juliana Chen, Chief Medical Officer, Cartwheel:

*I am lucky to work with students and families every day, and here's something I know: **taking care of your mental health is one of the most important things you can do. And the best moments happen when you take time away from screens**—whether that's hanging out with family and friends, doing an activity you love, or spending time outside. That's exactly what this book is about, and these questions are here to help you keep exploring. There are no right answers. Just start somewhere and see where it takes you!*



### What surprised you most?

Was there a fact, a story, or an idea that you didn't expect? Why do you keep thinking about it?



### When was the last time you were really bored—and what happened next?

Did you reach for your phone right away, or did you sit with it for a while? What would have happened if you'd waited a little longer?



### Have you ever felt invisible because someone was on their phone?

Has that ever happened with a parent, a sibling, a friend, or someone you wanted to talk to? What did it feel like—and what do you wish had happened instead?

## MY AMAZING CHALLENGE



**Think about a time you had so much fun with a friend you forgot to check your phone. What were you doing?**

What made it so good? What would it take to make moments like that happen more often?



**The book compares technology companies to big tobacco. Does that change how you think about the apps you use?**

Have you ever opened an app just to check something and then looked up and an hour had passed? Why do you think that happens?



**If someone who didn't know you watched your screen time for a day, what would they think you care about most?**

Is that actually true? Is there something you care about that your screen time doesn't show?



**If you were going to rebel against screen culture, what would you do—or what have you already done?**

What feels right for your life? Is there something you tried, want to try, or are still thinking about?



**What do you love to do when you're not on a screen?**

This isn't about what you think you should say—what genuinely makes you feel good, energized, or proud? When's the last time you did that—and what would make it easier to do more of it?

Cartwheel partners with school districts across the country to support youth mental health. Learn more at [cartwheelcare.org](https://cartwheelcare.org).

# Your Brain on Screens



Not everyone knows this. But you should. the apps you scroll through, the videos you watch, the games you play—they're designed to be hard to put down.

**Not by accident. On purpose.**

The people who build them study exactly what makes your brain want to keep going. Understanding how that works doesn't make you weak—it makes you smarter than they expected.

# What's Happening in your Brain



When something exciting shows up on your screen—a funny video, a new “like”, a message from a friend—your brain releases a chemical called **dopamine**. It's the feeling of “ooh, what's next?” Like opening a birthday present or scoring a goal.

Apps, videos, and video games are designed to keep that feeling coming in small, unpredictable bursts. **Like a slot machine.**



But here's what they don't tell you: **that feeling doesn't last**. After a while, the scrolling that was supposed to feel good can leave you feeling...Flat. Empty. Anxious. Like something is missing—even if you can't explain what.

**That feeling is real. And it makes sense.**

# The Comparison Trap

The apps and videos you scroll through show you the best, most exciting moments of other people's lives. Not the boring parts. Just the highlight reel.

Your brain starts comparing without you even trying—*their life looks more fun, they have more friends, why don't I look like that?*



Even when you know it isn't real, it's hard not to feel it. That constant comparison can make you feel lonely even when you're surrounded by people. Like you're not enough—even when you are.

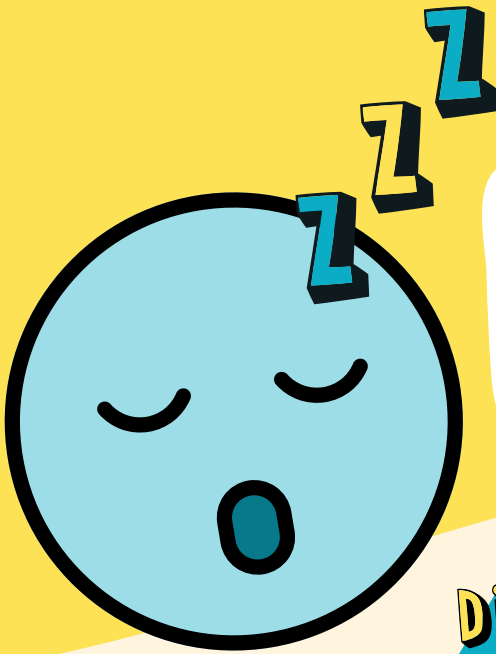
And it doesn't stop there. It shows up in your friendships too. Ever snapped at someone without knowing why? Screens might have something to do with that.

**But now you can see through it.**



**You're not performing for anyone.**

# Screens & Sleep



Your brain needs sleep to focus, learn new things, handle stress, and help you feel like yourself. Screens before bed trick your brain into thinking it's still daytime—making it harder to fall asleep.

## Did you know?

Most kids your age need

**9–11 hours of sleep.**

Most aren't getting it.

A tired brain makes everything harder—you're more anxious, more irritable, more overwhelmed. Sleep is one of the most important things for your mental health. **Protecting it is a rebel move.**



# What you actually feel like **offline**

Here's something worth trying: next time you spend a few hours away from screens—outside, doing something, hanging out in person with a friend—notice how you feel. Not right away. Maybe 30 minutes in.

What do you notice? Are you less stressed?  
Do you feel more like yourself? It's not that screens are evil—but your brain finally got a chance to

# BREATHE



When you stop comparing and stop performing, **you start noticing what's actually around you**—your friends, your thoughts, the things you actually enjoy.

**You're in charge of that. That's what feeling good actually feels like.** And honestly? That's the whole point.

# Rebel moves worth

# Trying



Put your phone in another room when you sleep. Your mood will thank you tomorrow.

Notice how you feel after 30 minutes scrolling vs. 30 minutes doing something else.



Make plans with a friend that don't involve a screen. Being together in person is one of the best things you can do for how you feel.

When something feels off, name it. Anxious, lonely, left out—saying it out loud or even to yourself is the first step. Taking care of yourself includes asking for help when you need it.



*Taking care of your mental health is one of the most important things you can do. And some of the best moments happen when you step away from screens. You're worth both.*

— Dr. Juliana Chen, Chief Medical Officer, Cartwheel

# Other Helpful Resources

**My Amazing Challenge** is presented by Cartwheel, inspired by *The Amazing Generation*.

## From Cartwheel

**Helping Your Child Build Healthy Screen Habits**: A guide on how to support your child's emotional health in a digital world.

**Parent Guide Series**: Practical, expert-informed resources designed to help parents and caregivers navigate common challenges and support their child's mental health.

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## From The Anxious Generation

**Classroom Educator's Guide**: A full classroom curriculum, parent/caregiver letters, and facilitator tips.

**Community Reads Guide**: Discussion questions organized into three tracks: questions for young readers, questions for adult readers (reading *The Anxious Generation*), and questions for families/groups reading both books together.

**Digital Discussion Guide**: Conversational discussion questions written directly to kids—covering topics like what surprised them, how they feel when adults pay attention to screens instead of them, similarities between big tech and big tobacco, and what they'd do to rebel against screen culture.

**Amazing Generation Games**: Kid-friendly activity pages including a coloring page, a crossword puzzle focused on screen-free real-life activities, a visual matching game, a maze, and a "Rebels' Code" word search. These are ideal as book club icebreakers, warm-ups, or between-session activities.

**Four Weeks to a Let Grow Kid Guide**: Parent-facing independence-building guide from Let Grow. Focused on helping parents step back so kids can build resilience.

# About



Cartwheel is the nation's largest and most trusted telehealth provider for K-12 schools, students, and families. Cartwheel partners with 400 school districts across 16 states to deliver comprehensive mental health services to students, families, and school staff. Founded in 2022 by educators and clinicians, Cartwheel combines evidence-based clinical care with technology to ensure every child has access to high-quality mental health support. Cartwheel accepts all major insurance plans including Medicaid and provides care at no cost to uninsured families.

Learn more at [cartwheel.org](https://cartwheel.org)