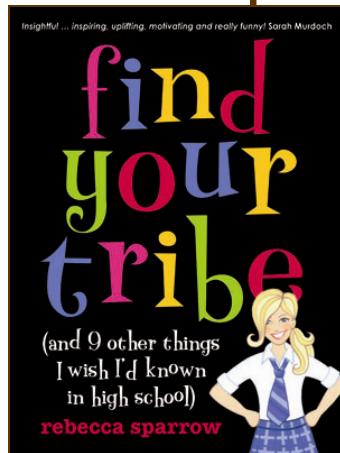


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FIND YOUR TRIBE

(and 9 other things I wish I'd known in
high school)

Rebecca Sparrow



Teachers' Notes by Sam Pidgeon

Written by a practising high school teacher and
head of department – middle school curriculum

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SYNOPSIS

Find Your Tribe is an accessible and entertaining book which deals with a number of big issues for high school students in a serious but enjoyable way. The book does not speak down to students and while it contains plenty of contemporary references, students will not feel as though Sparrow is trying to be one of them.

Chapters dealing with the potentially difficult topics of sex, alcohol and drug use do so with sensitivity and focus on common sense and self-care rather than graphic descriptions of behaviours or substances. These chapters offer an excellent support to teachers of HRE, HPE, Sex and Drug Education. Students could access these chapters as a part of research or the content could form the basis for class dialogue about these issues.

With a mix of Sparrow's own recollections and advice, quotes and comments from a range of high profile people, factual content and plenty of recommended websites and books for further research the book can be studied in a number of ways within a high school program and could even be recommended reading for parents of students entering or studying at high school.

While the book will appeal more to girls, the themes and information will also hold interest for boys.

THEMES

- Friendship – Chapter 1 “Find your tribe”
- Resilience – Chapter 2 “Learn to bounce back”
- Getting in touch with and trusting your intuition – Chapter 3 “Your feelings are your inner compass”
- Personal health and fitness – Chapter 4 “You don't have to be sporty to walk the dog”
- Body image – Chapter 5 “Not even Miranda Kerr always looks like Miranda Kerr”
- Dealing with stress and maintaining balance – Chapter 6 “Your future success has little to do with your Year 12 score”

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- Contributing to society – Chapter 7 “Give back and gain perspective”
- Drug and alcohol use – Chapter 8 “Binge drinking can make you look really stupid (and smoking gives you yellow teeth ...)”
- Healthy relationships and sexuality – Chapter 9 “Love is meant to feel great!”
- Seeking help and advice – Chapter 10 “Just Ask!”

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SCHOOLS

- Have multiple copies available in the school library. The book could be recommended reading for students entering high school or having issues in a particular area of their life.
- Recommended reading for parents of high school students.
- Use a class set of the book as a basis for a term or semester of HRE or Pastoral Care lessons. Focus on one topic or chapter each week or fortnight.
- Use various chapters of the book in relevant curriculum areas such as HPE, English and Performing Arts.

ACTIVITIES

1. Imagine yourself aged 35 and what your life may be like over the coming 15-20 years. Write a letter to your teenage self from your 35-year-old self outlining various milestones and stories from your life so far.
2. Write a letter to final year primary students with some things you wish you'd known before starting high school.
3. Choose one of the chapter topics from the book and research and write a feature article for a teenage magazine addressing that topic.
4. Imagine that you have been asked to give a speech to students at your school as you graduate from year 12. Keeping in mind themes from *Find Your Tribe*, what do you think you might say to the students to inspire and motivate them?

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5. Go to one of the websites listed at the back of the book. Explore the site and then review it by commenting on its usefulness for high school students.
6. Choose one of the well known identities quoted in the book. Research more about their career.
7. Ask your parents, carers or other family members if they have any photos of themselves in their high school years. Ask them about their memories of high school and what they wish they'd known in high school.
8. Write a blog or diary entry about an experience you have had so far in your high school years. Looking back on it now, how would you have handled it differently? What have you learnt from the experience?
9. The editor of a popular magazine read by many high school students has asked your class to write an advice page including questions and answers. The focus is on drug and alcohol use and/or healthy romantic relationships.
10. Choose one substance (drug or alcoholic beverage). Research the effect that this substance has on young people and use this information as the basis of a feature article for a popular magazine read by young people.
11. Write a series of blog or diary entries exploring the feelings of a character who is involved in a romantic relationship. The character is considering taking the physical aspect of the relationship further.
12. The Federal Government regularly runs advertising campaigns targeting youth drug and alcohol abuse, particularly in the lead up to Schoolies Week. Write a proposal for an advertising campaign focussing on risky behaviours for this year's Schoolies Week.
13. Write your own chapter for *Find Your Tribe*. It could be about one of the topics covered by Sparrow or one of your own.
14. Bullying is a big issue in high schools. Read pages 10 and 11 on bullying. Find out your school's anti-bullying policy. Write a proposal to your principal outlining your suggestions for tackling bullying at your school.
15. What chapter of the book interested or inspired you the most? What did you learn and how will you try and put what you have learned into practice?

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16. Choose one of the themes addressed in the book. Write a short script or cartoon strip featuring two high school aged characters dealing with a problem associated with that theme.

AUTHOR MOTIVATION – WRITTEN BY REBECCA SPARROW

My career as a novelist has taken me down a path I would never have expected – speaking with teenage girls about the skills they need for life. Since 2003 and the publication of *The Girl Most Likely*, I have been asked to speak to teenage girls about the biggest lessons I've learnt in my life: learning to be resilient, finding my tribe, giving back to the community. I have been dubbed 'The Queen of Teens' thanks to my fanbase.

I first came up with the idea for *Find Your Tribe* in late 2005/early 2006 but couldn't work out the shape of the book and how I wanted to present the information. When I became pregnant in 2008 and found out I was having a daughter I felt inspired and spent all hours of the day and night writing the first draft.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Over the past 15 years Rebecca Sparrow has earned a living selling touch lamps, working as a nanny, a travel writer, a television publicist, a marketing executive, a magazine editor and a secret shopper (once). In her spare time she is an Ambassador of War Child Australia – a not for profit agency dedicated to giving aid to children affected by war – and The Pyjama Foundation which sends 'reading angels' into the homes of foster children.

Rebecca's first novel, *The Girl Most Likely*, was published in 2003. Her second novel, *The Year Nick McGowan Came To Stay*, was published in 2006 and debuted as a stage play at La Boite Theatre Company, in 2007. Her third novel, *Joel & Cat Set The Story Straight*, was co-written with Nick Earls and published in July 2007.