



Prepped & Polished, LLC  
21 Eliot Street  
South Natick, MA 01760

Announcer: Recorded live.

Alexis: Hello, and thanks for joining us for the Prepped and Polished Radio Show. I'm your host, Alexis Avila, licensed guidance counselor, private tutor, and founder of Prepped and Polished, LLC Tutoring and Test Prep in beautiful South Natick, Massachusetts.

The Prepped and Polished Radio Show is your educational insider. Our show is brought to you by Prepped and Polished, LLC, where I am the principal educator. To learn more about our firm, please visit [PreppedandPolished.com](http://PreppedandPolished.com). Thank you to everyone who is listening to the program. We appreciate you taking an interest in the information we bring to families and educators around the globe.

For future shows, up-to-date information, and on-going educational news, please join our Facebook community by searching for Prepped and Polished and then clicking "like" and you can follow us on Twitter, the hashtag is [@PreppedPolished](https://twitter.com/PreppedPolished).

Joining our show today is David Poles. David is the founder of Newton Counseling Center in Newton Center, Massachusetts, where he helps other teens grow to maximize their full potential. David is a licensed mental health counselor, certified rehabilitation counselor, and a licensed alcohol and drug counselor.

Since 1995, David has committed his professional life to assisting clients in becoming more successful. One of David's specialties is helping late-age adolescent males learn how to reduce painful emotions while staying sober.

We are delighted to have David on our show. He is going to share with us about what's going on today with teens, give us some tips on how teenagers can stay sober, stay happy, especially through those turbulent adolescent years.

Now, before we start, I just want to make sure our listeners have our contact info. Our e-mail address is [radio@preppedandpolished.com](mailto:radio@preppedandpolished.com). If you would like to submit a question at any time, you can use that e-mail address. Often our listeners will have questions while they are listening or afterwards. We always appreciate hearing from our listeners, so you can e-mail us at any time at [radio@preppedandpolished.com](mailto:radio@preppedandpolished.com).



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Okay, David, are you on the line?

David: Yes, I am. Good morning.

Alexis: Good morning, good morning. Thank you so much for joining us. How are you doing today?

David: Good. Thank you, Alexis, for having me.

Alexis: Good, good. So, tell me something. Newton seems to be a pretty safe, happening town. Do you actually have a lot of teenagers in Newton who are actually dealing with anger issues.

David: Well, actually, yes. There is a large amount of drug use that takes place in the suburbs, and Newton certainly isn't exempt from that. And unmanageable emotions usually go with drug use, depression, anger, anxiety, so unfortunately, yes, that is part of the landscape of probably most affluent communities. It doesn't discriminate, drug use, and anger can certainly go with that.

Alexis: That's really interesting, because it seems like the stigma with the drug use is, you know, we hear about it in the inner cities, but to hear that it goes over to the suburbs is interesting.

David: Oh, absolutely.

Alexis: So, David, can you start out a little bit by telling us about what is Newton Counseling Center, and what motivated you to start your own practice.

David: Sure. It's a one person, one man operation. I'm the owner, and I have one employee, that's myself, and I've been interested in owning my own business since going to graduate school at UMass Boston when I started there in 1998. I had thought about private practice. I think many of us getting into this field of psychology aspire to that, and then we get experience from working at various locations, working for somebody. So, that has always been an interest of mine since going to graduate school.

I first worked in the field of Social Services in 1995 after I got my undergraduate degree. I worked for a DYS facility on Cape Cod at an Upward Bound program in Brewster, so that exposed me to working with



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adolescents, and I've worked at a variety of locations. I've worked at a homeless shelter for men, I've worked at a substance abuse treatment program at a hospital, but in terms of wanting to work for myself, I think that is something many of us aspire to when we are in graduate school, and not all of us do. It's a different skill set, certainly, learning how to be a business person versus just providing the services, and it's exciting.

Alexis: Absolutely. Yes, definitely. I had a chance actually in the last couple of months to see your space, and it's just a beautiful space, and I'm sure your patients love opening up to you there.

David: They certainly seem pretty happy there. It's MBTA accessible and it's accessible for clients with disabilities. I had one gentleman who used a wheelchair and he was able to get in and out of there pretty easily.

Alexis: That's great. That's always helpful. So, I just wanted to pick your brain a little bit about teens. Now, is helping teenage males to overcome anger and to stay sober, is it as stressful a task as I think it is. Because, I don't think I could do it myself, so I commend you. How do you help teenagers with their problems?

David: Sure, well it's certainly challenging, but it's not impossible. But, I try not to operate in a vacuum. I stress the importance of having parental assistance as well, because I think part of the job is giving them education and support so that they can guide their clients. If it's pertaining to substance abuse, certainly I see a lot of enabling, so part of my job is to educate them. As far as working with the clients, no, it's challenging but it's rewarding.

Alexis: Definitely.

David: Did that answer your question?

Alexis: Yeah, absolutely it sure did. Now, I'm sure you've seen the problems teenagers deal with evolve over the years, especially since you started in the early 2000s. I mean, at least I've observed that teenagers are a lot of different from when I was a teen. Now, have you seen a change in teens over the past 10 years? I mean, are the problems they face today the same, or are they different?



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David: Well, that's a good question Alexis. I was thinking about that. I even went back to 1995, when I first entered the field of social services, and I thought about the issues that teens dealt with back then versus now, and there are a lot of similarities. Drug use certainly is still an issue, peer pressure, conflicts with parents, adolescents being rebellious, hormonal changes, that is still the same.

Alexis: Right, right.

David: Now, there are different types of drug available.

Alexis: Really?

David: Well, when I was working in 1995, with the population I worked with, there wasn't as much focus on opiates as there is now. There's pretty wide-spread usage of various opiates like Oxycontin and Percocet and heroin, so I don't remember seeing that as much. I'd say also similarly definitely a lot of problems can be traced back to the home, in terms of parenting. Not to blame anybody, but parents certainly have a major role in terms of how things are going with the child.

Alexis: Right.

David: So, that's the good news, too. They can be very influential, they can set better boundaries with adolescents, and through education, that certainly can take place. As far as differences, obviously there are more in terms of technology that is out there, Facebook and Twitter and texting, things like that. That certainly wasn't around back then.

Alexis: And podcasts.

David: And podcasts, like this, right! And maybe, more pressure too with the economy. I think there is a lot of pressure on kids now from their parents in order to help them get into good schools, more of a focus on grades and more than ever it is so important to think about one's future with the economy and whatnot, so that's probably a big difference too, if we are talking about changes between then and now.

Alexis: Definitely, definitely. Do you, just a quick follow-up, would like one of your suggestions to a student who is just kind of maybe struggling with anger and is kind of subjected to the Facebook, Twitter, is one of your



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suggestions to him maybe to put that aside and allocate some time away from these technological mediums?

David: Sure, if that is a trigger for the person's anger. I have one client right now who is a pretty temperamental guy. He is in his early 20s, but one of the things that he does historically when he has gotten angry, is he's done a lot venting via Facebook, and it's gotten to the point where it can be abusive towards others. So, that is something that he should not be doing. I have some tips here, in terms of how an adolescent can manage his or her anger. I can get into those if you want.

Alexis: Oh yeah, yeah, let's do that in a little bit.

David: Okay, sure.

Alexis: Actually, I don't really know how to phrase this question, but we do have a guest on this show who texted us a couple fragments of a question, so I'm going to try to piece-meal these together.

David: All right.

Alexis: Guest #3 on our show made a comment that some people go through adolescence, from childhood to adulthood in one day. Have you witnessed this. So, I don't know if that's an answerable question. Are kids growing up fast now, I guess is the question.

David: Oh, well I think so, in some ways they are. Kids, adolescents, they are very bright, they are exposed to more now than I ever was at that age. They are bright, they are more prepared for college, more exposed to the good and bad in the media. So, in some ways, yes, they do grow up a lot sooner, sure.

Alexis: Wow.

David: That can be a good thing. It's a double edged sword. It depends on the upbringing, too. Like, a child in an abuse upbringing or where parents are always fighting, they are forced to grow up in some ways that aren't healthy, and they are exposed to substance abuse or mental illness, or domestic violence. They are forced to grow up in a hurry and a lot of it all goes back to the parents and how the kids are raised. So, yes, in some ways that is true, sure.



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Alexis: Yes. That really resonates. It makes a lot of sense. David, what are some general tips that you can offer teenagers that are trying to stay happy, stay grounded through those turbulent, confusing, adolescent years. I don't know about you, but I wish I had some tips through my adolescent years. It's a confusing time. But, what do you tend to do? What are some tips that you can give teens?

David: Sure. Well, it's so important for teens to have someone to talk to, ideally the parents. For example, maybe finding a time that the teen and his or her parents can be comfortable and relaxed together, make sure that there's no distraction that the two of them can talk. That is certainly one tip for maybe improving the relationship with a teen's parents. Let's see, it's important to have healthy friendships, knowing who it is that you hang out with, having hobbies, doing what you want, being passionate, having goals, sports. Those are certainly ways to improve one's happiness as a teen.

Alexis: Let me just ask you a quick question. What if the student is really not athletic? Maybe he is athletic but he really doesn't want to get up at 7:00 AM on Sunday to go to those football practices, because you know with athletics you have to be very committed. Are there other opportunities for some of these students to stay motivated and not have to do a varsity sport say?

David: Sure. I have one client. I've worked with him since he was a teen and one of the things he got into was band, music, he got involved in that. Nowadays, schools are offering a variety of clubs that someone can join, so I don't think you are just limited to sports.

Alexis: Right.

David: I think a lot of it...I don't mean to be repetitive, but I think the parents can be very influential, too. Sometimes parents can be very judgmental and really try to force things on a teen. So, I think if the parents are cultivating a liberal and open-minded perspective as far as whatever it is the teen wants to do, assuming it's healthy, then I think that should be the premise of allowing the teen to want to explore some different options.

Alexis: Absolutely.



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David: It could be reading, it could be music, it doesn't have to be football.

Alexis: That's really interesting. That's enlightening. Well, thank you very much, David. That was very helpful, and that wraps up our show for today, with David Poles, Newton Counseling Center.

Now, please visit [Newtoncounselingcenter.com](http://Newtoncounselingcenter.com) to learn more about David's practice, and while you are there, I highly encourage you to ask David to add you as a subscriber to his informative and inspirational newsletters. I get them myself about once or twice a month, and I tell you, he gives you tips on how to stay happy for both teenagers and adults, and it's very encouraging. I really appreciate those newsletters, David.

David: Thank you, Alexis. I appreciate you taking the time to have me on your show.

Alexis: Sure, any time. Thank you so much. Thank you for joining us on the Prepped and Polished Radio Show.