



CASE STUDY

Hope Unlimited at Genazzano FCJ College

80 Year 10 students. 3 hours. 20 put pen to paper with written feedback.
Every piece is printed inside, in the students' own words.

The room

On the evening of the seminar, a piece of written feedback arrived from a Year 10 student. That morning she'd arrived in the city having, in her words, just done terrible on an ergo. She'd spent her off season buried by her own failure, avoiding the tests she feared. She wrote to tell us the goals never left, they were just dimmed. She signed off with a promise to never stop hoping. Pinky swear.

19 more sent feedback with stories of their own.

On 17 June 2026, Hope Unlimited ran with the 80 Year 10 students of Genazzano FCJ College, Kew, at RMIT University in Melbourne. 3 hours. Pen and paper. No phones. Quiet enough to think.

The seminar covers the 4 sub-skills that build hope: grit, optimism, courage and resilience. Students name their character strengths, write a vision they can actually see, and leave with one moonshot in their own handwriting.

In the days that followed, 20 students provided written feedback. It's printed on the following pages in their own words.

“You couldn't have come at a better time in my life.”

Year 10 student,
Genazzano FCJ College



Before the cohort arrived. RMIT University, Melbourne, 17 June 2026.

In their own words

All 20 pieces of feedback, in the students' own words. Grouped by the 4 themes they kept returning to.

THEME 1

The wake-up call

"To be completely honest, when I first stepped into that room this morning, I was absolutely expecting a boring and uninspiring speech about our possible future subjects or careers available, which is how many careers discussions have left me feeling in the past, but to my happy surprise, within the first minute I was immediately engaged in your story and what you were trying to promote. The seminar unlocked a part of my brain that has made me realise achieving my dreams is actually possible. Your seminar has ignited a sense of determination within me that has made me no longer afraid of my future, but also excited for the upcoming obstacles ahead as well as hopefully many future achievements. I have already started outlining my vision for the future by making a summary of all the notes I wrote down today. Ultimately, thank you so much for speaking to my school today and I really hope you understand how genuinely impactful your teachings are."

Year 10 student, Genazzano FCJ College

"I wanted to thank you for the work that you do and for how much you've inspired me. You are by a mile the most inspirational person and best speaker I've ever heard in my life. You've changed so many lives and I have no doubt that you will help to change mine. Thankyou so much for inspiring me today."

Year 10 student, Genazzano FCJ College

"Thank you for the inspirational and motivational insight into unleashing our greatest potential and failing till succeeding by employing our talents. Thank you so much for today's speech - it is something I believe I will think of throughout my life and hopefully positively impact my trajectory in life."

Year 10 student, Genazzano FCJ College

"Today I attended your session, and it made me rethink my idea of hope."

Year 10 student, Genazzano FCJ College

Belief, rebuilt

“You are the first person to speak to me about mindset and belief and actually reach me. The morning of your talk, I entered the city having just done terrible on an ergo. I felt like less of a person, because I truly believed that is what the numbers reflected. I have found my off season incredibly difficult, and had to row at a city club after severe withdrawal from the water post season. During this off season I have failed over and over, except I didn't pick myself up and dust myself off, I just kept getting buried by my own failure. I feared this failure so much that I avoided specific ergos entirely. But because of your talk today, I realised that the goals never left, they were just dimmed by those around me and my own consuming doubt. I have made the executive decision to apply my newfound purpose to every session. I now understand that goals and purpose are two different things in my mind, and I am confident that with everything you taught me today, I will steadily gain myself belief back, stop feeling sorry for myself, and find people who want to see me win. You couldn't have come at a better time in my life. I promise to never stop hoping, pinky swear.”

Year 10 student, Genazzano FCJ College

“You really sparked something within me today, something that I think I'd lost for a while, and you also gave me a big wake up call. For a long time, I've been quite lost and unsure about my life, and I think today has ignited a sense of hope that I haven't had in a long time. I had swim training tonight and recently I've been going at the back of the lane more often for harder sets because I think I've been lacking confidence, but tonight I thought I'd push myself and go first even though I didn't think I'd be able to keep up. I ended up having a really great and positive session and stayed at the front the whole time and was also hitting good times. I want to be consistent and keep showing up with the same positivity I had tonight. Today made me realise that I shouldn't be afraid of failure and that I can pick myself back up, dust myself off and try again if I fail. I also think social media has been really affecting my belief in myself and my self-worth, so I'm going to filter out negative and toxic accounts and hold myself accountable to be offline more and do things that make me forget about my phone. Today really just reminded me to dream crazy and not let what others say, things I see online, but mostly myself affect my goals and aspirations. I just wanted to say thank you for giving me back the hope I'd lost, I really appreciate it.”

Year 10 student, Genazzano FCJ College

THEME 2, CONTINUED

“Thank you first of all for your amazing speech to my year level of Genazzano. I truly sat in that audience constantly blown away at how moved I was. The truth is, recently I've been battling with a lot of mental health issues of stress, anxiety, doubt and struggling with confidence. I came today expecting not much but still felt good about arriving. I left that session with a realisation I never thought I needed until I got it. So very deeply, thank you for being the person I needed in this time to help me get out of my mind, put the negativity aside and reach for the sky. You're truly an inspiration and at some points made me tear up in the lecture because it was a harsh truth but it was true. Thank you so much.”

Year 10 student, Genazzano FCJ College

“I was present at your talk today, it filled me with courage.”

Year 10 student, Genazzano FCJ College

THEME 3

Vision, rediscovered

“I'm a student from Genazzano you came to speak to today. I actually have a vision board in my room but from today I realised that what I had been confusing as a loss of motivation was a loss of vision. My vision board was old, outdated and no longer reflecting my life. Thanks to you, I've re-discovered that spark and drive I've struggled to find for so long. Everyone around me, friends and family, tell me I am motivated and determined and I truly have felt so misunderstood around this for pretty much the whole year because whilst I am intelligent I've become a victim to procrastination and distraction and thinking of it now, when I described this feeling as burnout, perhaps that was an excuse. It's not burnout, I'd lost just how important my goals are and what I want to achieve. I had no real purpose or reason to be studying so hard. Lastly, your speech helped me clarify my goals. I never thought it'd be possible to genuinely feel so inspired by a speech. If this is what inspiration is, I don't think I've ever felt it before. Thank you for what you do.”

Year 10 student, Genazzano FCJ College

“If this is what inspiration is, I don't think I've ever felt it before.”

Year 10 student, Genazzano FCJ College

“Thank you for your presentation today, it really made an impact on how I feel about the dreams I didn't dare to dream before today.”

Year 10 student, Genazzano FCJ College

“Your speech today inspired me to start believing in myself and start doing things that I want to do even though they feel out of reach currently.”

Year 10 student, Genazzano FCJ College

“Words cannot begin to describe how grateful I am for you coming to speak to our school today. Your words moved me and have inspired me to really have hope and belief for my future. I learnt a lot from your talk today and have walked away with a greater sense of purpose and commitment which I will carry throughout the rest of my life. Thank you so much for starting my journey of belief and hope.”

Year 10 student, Genazzano FCJ College

“Thanks so much for your talk it was really inspiring and motivating. I learnt to really think about my goals and dreams.”

Year 10 student, Genazzano FCJ College

“I'm one of the year 10s you spoke to at RMIT today from Genazzano. I just wanted to email to let you know how much your workshop today really inspired me, it was so incredibly helpful and I hope you never stop sharing your wisdom with others!! After your workshop today, I feel like I can take on anything. I have finally recognised that while it will be difficult, it is not impossible, I can achieve my goals if I truly set my mind to it. I am so thankful to you for giving me this wake up call to really ignite my courage.”

Year 10 student, Genazzano FCJ College

Action, the same night

“Ever since I was a kid as young as 8 I struggled with a steadily depleting self-image and just in general, hopelessness. On Sunday, I had a massive cry to my boyfriend about how difficult my life has become, but on Monday I took myself on a 10 kilometre walk the second I woke up to sort through my thoughts, and came out of it with a will to change my mindset, so our session with you today couldn't have come at a better time. I made a commitment and now have been gifted with lessons and support. As soon as I left the auditorium I made a list of the goals I want to achieve. Thankyou so much for inspiring me today.”

Year 10 student, Genazzano FCJ College

“Thank you for the wonderful session today! Your words and advice have been inspirational, and it also encouraged me to believe that I can truly do anything despite people stating that I cannot. I transcribed some quotes that I wrote down during the session and put them on my vision board. I also added images that are relevant to goals and things I wanna accomplish both short and long term. Thank you again!”

Year 10 student, Genazzano FCJ College

“Your speech at RMIT today really inspired me to believe in myself and start improving as I now feel motivated and am going to stay on track. I loved and I resonated with your idea of seeds of greatness and I will be using these ideas when working towards my dreams. Thanks so much”

Year 10 student, Genazzano FCJ College

“Your speech has motivated me to stay consistent and work hard to achieve my dreams of becoming a professional musician. I am so grateful to have heard your words and I bought a vision board as soon as I left the city. Thank you.”

Year 10 student, Genazzano FCJ College

“Before you came to talk to our school yesterday, I knew what my passions and callings were to, however I was conflicted with the fact that for as long as I had recognised that I had had these passions, I wasn't actively fulfilling them. When I heard you talk yesterday, all the fear and uncertainty I had unintentionally associated with my passion diminished and instead a need to fulfil these passions came. For the rest of the day, I thought about your message and when I came home, the first thing I did was go over the notes from your talk. I was inspired by everything that you had said and I decided to watch your ted-talk on youtube. That talk, like the one at RMIT, also gave me a sense of importance in my passions. From there, I spent the rest of the afternoon practicing my skills. Because my passion is music, I choose to practice piano for the rest of the night. Today I decided I wanted to improve my consistency so I chose to do what you had suggested, to go out and run for one minute. I want to try and continue this consistent routine for a month like you said. A commitment which I have been putting off for a while, that is related to music, is learning a new instrument. For months I have had random moments when I have decided to practice this other instrument, but overall my practice has never been consistent. So, I wanted to change that. Today I decided I wanted to actually reach this goal starting from today. I am going to practice this instrument for 10 minutes everyday for a month, and then like the running routine, create that habit before beginning to improve it. I chose to incorporate these into my routine because I was inspired by your suggestions during your talk. Another concept you promoted in your talk was creating a vision board, which I am intent to do and from that, I will make sure I begin this weekend as from your talk I know how it can help support my passion and especially ensure I keep my consistency. I thought I should also mention that from your talk, I was of course inspired by everything you said, but also, I was deeply inspired by the fact that this is actually something you choose to do in your life, using your own skills, just so you can improve someone's else's journey. I am incredibly thankful for your empathy as what you do is something that I now know significantly changes the perspective of people like me who have passions in high school but are dis-influenced by so many factors. I believe that hearing your ideas has truly affected me and my future for the better so I wanted to thank you for choosing to do what you do.”

Year 10 student, Genazzano FCJ College

“I did something today. I'm going to do more tomorrow.”

Year 10 student, Genazzano FCJ College

What this feedback tells us

3 things worth noting, for the teacher reading this.

01 They named the real problem.

One student wrote that what she'd been calling burnout all year was really an outdated vision board and goals she'd stopped seeing. Another separated goals from purpose in a single sentence. A third traced her back-of-the-lane swimming to a confidence problem, then fixed it that night. When a Year 10 student corrects her own label in writing, the language has stuck.

02 The action happened before bedtime.

A goals list written on the way out of the auditorium. Vision boards bought on the way home. A swim set led from the front of the lane. 10 minutes of instrument practice, day 1 of 30. A summary of seminar notes typed up the same evening. The measure of a seminar is what happens the same day, and this is what the same day looked like.

03 20 of 80 gave written feedback. Nobody asked them to.

1 in 4 students provided written feedback, unprompted, most within hours of getting home. Year 10 students don't write half a page out of politeness. They write when something lands. That's the signal a wellbeing program should watch for.

FROM THE FEEDBACK

“You are by a mile the most inspirational person and best speaker I've ever heard in my life. You've changed so many lives and I have no doubt that you will help to change mine.”

Year 10 student, Genazzano FCJ College, written feedback after the seminar

About the work

Hope Unlimited

Hope Unlimited is a 3-hour social and emotional wellbeing seminar for Years 9 to 12. In person, on your campus or in a venue like this one. Pen and paper. No phones. Quiet enough to think. Students leave with their character strengths named, a vision they can see, and one moonshot in their own handwriting.

About Glen

Glen Gerreyn is the founder of The HopeFULL Institute. Former Young Australian of the Year (Queensland, Community Service). 750 schools. More than 1 million young people. He's based in Brisbane, a father of 4, and a lifelong student of human flourishing. He leads with story, then strategy. He doesn't swear to win the room.



Glen Gerreyn
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Want to talk about a date for your school?

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