

KIT MAG

E - M A G A Z I N E O C T O B E R 2 5



HALLOWEEN SPECIAL

#SCARILY
GOOD CPD

Blogs from :
Lee Jowett, Mick Knowles,
Diane Hall, Dr Julia Malkin
Ray Seagrave, Alison Harper,
Terry Cook, Josh Hollerhan,
Terry Lefteri, Pennie Alexander

THE INDUSTRY E-MAG..

That Keeps Inspiring Today's Instructors



ALSO THIS ISSUE...

- Meet The Instructor
- Ask MIA
- Our Partners HELP appeal

IT Kills Impressionable Teens

Lee Jowett is training manager at K.I.T and owner of i-Can Driving Solutions Ltd. In 2013 he completed the BTEC 4 in Coaching for Driver Development and has since gone on to deliver the BTEC 4 for Tri-Coaching. He is accredited by Cranfield University to deliver 'Driver Metrics' psychometric profiling behavioural change courses and has completed Cranfield's Driver Psychology course. In 2020 he authored the 'Meet The Standards' eBooks collection and has recently been inducted into The Institute of Master Tutors of Driving (IMTD)



**LEE
JOWETT
(FOUNDER)**

In the movie IT there featured the killing of impressionable young people on the fictional streets of Derry. On the streets of the UK hundreds of Impressionable Teenagers succumb to their demise every year, often as a result of someone clowning around. One of the most cited descriptions I see about young drivers today could revert to 'scary clowns'. Young impressionable characters who feel the need to entertain and amuse their audience by performing stunts and high jinks, which often go wrong leaving them the butt of the joke or in a worse-case scenario outcome.

Where things become more aligned to the horrors of the movie IT are that these young impressionable teenagers lurk often in the dark spaces of our road ways, seeking their latest escapade and often finding their next victims. Disfigured, dismembered our youngsters, is often the best case scenario at the hands of thrill-seeking clowns. Worst case is "every nightmare you've ever had. Your worst dream come true. Everything you ever were afraid of" as the statistics rack up year on year.

The good news in relation to Penniwise the evil clown from the movie IT is that his path of destruction only returns once every 27 years. The bad news in relation to Impressionable Teenagers dying on the roads is that this particular horror story returns on a daily basis, with an average, currently, of 1.6 fatalities in this age range on our roads every single day. Estimates conclude that through history Penniwise the clown has emerged from hibernation to kill around 18,000 young victims. This horrific amount pales in comparison to UK roads and our Impressionable Teenagers. Penniwise works in 27 year cycles, returning only after hibernation to add to his statistics. However the youngsters who are clowning around on our roads are homeothermic creatures who don't require the need for months or years of hibernation and as a result these 'killer clowns' are estimated to kill around 14,000 of their own demographic in every individual 27 year Penniwise cycle.



'IT' isn't acceptable.

We must take the lead in pushing standards of driver education into areas that ARE capable of reducing these figures. Addressing the behaviour and raising awareness in young drivers, helping them to understand risk in a realistic and proportionate way, rather than something so terrible that they imagine it only happens in the movies and to other people.

There are clowns in areas other than the sewers of our roads. Some of these clowns may work in organisations designed to protect young lives, promote 'safe driving for life' and regulate our industry.

The scariest part of this non-fiction story is that 30 years of research (RUE, GADGET, MERIT, HERMES) fed these governors everything they needed to understand what was necessary to create safer drivers.

DVSA's own 'Car and light van driving syllabus' states in its opening unit that the basis of the learning is that a 'driver's physical and emotional state and the physical and emotional states of any passengers can contribute to the cause of collisions.' Ironically it also goes on to state that 'the underlying challenges of this unit are to address the attitudes and misunderstandings that prevent drivers acting on the knowledge and understanding that they have'...Ironically since the attitude of DVSA heads of ADI back in 2014 prevented them from acting on the knowledge and understanding that they were given as a result of all of the research projects. Instead the scarily comedic message was that we should 'carry on doing what we've always done' When faced with the challenge of educating themselves in areas that were dark recesses and scary in places, DVSA ultimately allowed themselves to be self-serving, to 'be afraid' and led to their refusal to 'let go' of working only in the spaces of their known. Vehicle control, driving in traffic with a focus on fault rather than raising awareness, evaluation and understanding of motives with a focus on positive reinforcement. Elements that are key to behaviour change and maintenance.

So we sit here today with the stench of death still seeping from the sewerage of the nations carriageways. 'IT' still wreaking carnage and causation with the clowns still enforcing their own horrific agenda over our industry. Holding back those that want to develop understanding and move away from the misunderstandings that prevent them from acting on the knowledge and understandings that we were gifted by the likes of Mikkonen, Haskinen, Hattaka et al.

The message that rings out to me, can be found in one of Penniwise's most famous lines 'You haven't changed anything yet. You haven't changed your future. You, you haven't saved any of them' '.....Beep, beep Ritchie

TOPIC: WORKSHOPS

Knowledgeable CCL & SC / PT3 Workshops

Book To Attend



KNOWLEDGEABLE INSTRUCTOR TRAINING

The workshops that
Keep Inspiring Todays instructors





L OF A WAY TO HELP YOUR PUPILS

PANIC TO PASS

Diane Hall & Chris Allsopp are taking their Driving Test Nerves Specialist Workshop around the Country. See the ad in KITMAG for a date in your area....or treat yourself to a day out:-

For more information or to book. Follow the :[link](#)



**DIANE HALL
(NERVES SPECIALIST)**



From Panic to Pass

How 1-2-1 Sessions Can Help Your Learners – and yourselves - Conquer Test Day Nerves

A Real Case Study

As a driving instructor, you've probably seen it countless times: a learner who drives perfectly well during lessons but falls apart the moment they sit their test. Maybe you've reassured them, encouraged them, tried mock tests, or done everything you can think of – but the nerves still take over.

You're not alone, and neither are your learners. That's why I offer 1-2-1 sessions focused on overcoming driving test anxiety – and I'd love to show you how powerful they can be.

Let me share a recent case study with you. Recently, I had four clients taking their tests on the same day – two learners and two instructors going for their Part 2. I was thrilled to get four messages that day... all saying the same thing: "I passed!" Each person came to me with different challenges, and, starting last month, I'll be sharing their journeys in this blog series.

I hope their stories will help you understand how we can work together to support your anxious learners – especially when traditional methods just aren't enough.

Meet Sarah

Sarah (name changed for confidentiality) was referred to me by her instructor, John, who felt she was more than ready in terms of driving skills but kept crumbling on the day of the test.

In Sarah's own words:

"I'm usually fine on lessons, but it all goes to crap on test day. I feel like I've never driven before. I cry and my mind goes blank. One test almost turned into a driving lesson because it went so badly. I stalled twice – and I never stall on lessons. I held up traffic. My mistakes snowballed. I ended up with 5 serious faults."

Sarah's emotional landscape was just as complex. She described feeling:

- Frustration
- Embarrassment
- Panic
- Stress

The pressure of the test caused her to fixate on the smallest errors, triggering overthinking and a downward spiral of anxiety. She even said:

"I hold my breath, get shaky, and I'm really hard on myself before the test even starts."

Her fear wasn't just about driving – it was linked to previous negative experiences, like hating school exams and a COVID-related panic attack that had left emotional scars.

L OF A WAY TO HELP YOUR PUPILS

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DIANE HALL
(NERVES SPECIALIST)



How We Worked Together

In our 1-2-1 sessions we used Thought Field Therapy (TFT) – a technique that helps rapidly reduce anxiety and emotional overwhelm. Through tapping and talking, we addressed the root emotions Sarah was experiencing.

Here's how her emotional scale changed after just one session:

- Frustration: 7 → 0
- Embarrassment: 8 → 0
- Trauma: 7 → 0

Before her next test, we did a free top-up session, again using TFT to calm her nerves.

This time we worked on:

- Nervous/Overwhelmed: 8 → 0
- Embarrassment: 6 → 0
- Fear of Failure: 7 → 0

These weren't just numbers – they were real emotional shifts that Sarah felt in her body. She finally felt in control.

From Panic to Pass

After our session, Sarah was able to retake her test with a new mindset. She used all the techniques I had taught her in our session, which she was also able to access in video form in our Test Nerves Online Course, (which everyone receives free of charge after a 1-2-1 session) We had a quick call just before her test for a final boost – and she passed!

What This Means for You and Your Learners

As instructors, you already have so much on your plate: teaching, scheduling, motivating, managing test day logistics... but dealing with anxiety isn't something you're expected to be an expert in. That's where I come in.

When you refer a learner to me for a 1-2-1 session, you're giving them access to:

- Personalised support to target their unique fears
- Emotional tools they can use beyond driving
- A chance to finally enjoy the test instead of fearing it

Most importantly, you're not just helping them pass – you're helping them grow in confidence, reduce stress, and feel capable. These sessions are also available for instructors taking part 2/3 or SCs.

Let's Work Together

Sarah's story is just one of many. Each learner is different, but the pattern is the same: brilliant on lessons, blocked by nerves on test day.

If you have a learner like that – someone who can drive but just can't calm down – let's talk. My 1-2-1 sessions are designed to support your teaching, not replace it. Think of them as a toolkit for the bits you don't have time (or training) to address.

Because when we work together, learners like Sarah don't just pass – they thrive.

If you'd like to learn more or refer a student, get in touch with me today. Let's help your learners get over the final hurdle – and onto the road.

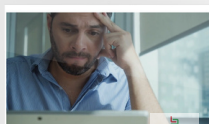
More information at www.lofaway2pass.com

1 PART 2/3 AND STANDARDS CHECK NERVES

2 DRIVING TEST NERVES

Driving Test Nerves Specialist workshops

Do you sometimes feel more like a counsellor or therapist than a driving instructor?
Learn amazing unique techniques to help your pupils with driving anxiety and test nerves, and for your own Part 2/3 or SC anxiety as well!

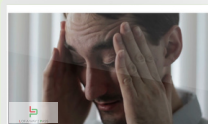


All delegates benefit from..

- FREE Zoom sessions
- How to beat Part 2/3/SC nerves and anxiety online course
- Two months FREE access to Driving Test Nerves Pro: giving you and your pupils access to the techniques covered in the workshop
- Workshop Manual
- Instructor Training Manual
- Two Minute Techniques Guide
- CPD Certificate
- Membership to private Driving Test Nerves Specialist Facebook group
- Featured on www.Lofaway2pass.com as Driving Test Nerves Specialists

Driving Test Nerves Pro

Provide your pupils with unlimited access to amazing techniques to combat Driving Anxiety & Test Day Nerves. In addition to happy pupils, it can also help to increase your pass rate and avoid those Standards Check Triggers!



Subscribers will gain..

- The Key to understanding how we 'create' emotions
- Strategies to control driving anxiety and test day nerves
- Techniques to eliminate nerves, fear, panic, intimidation, overwhelm & dread
- Increase confidence and self-esteem
- Ten second technique to stop muddling up left & right
- In-car demonstration of techniques with a learner driver
- Eliminating 'Auditory Exclusion', when what you say goes in one ear and out the other!

TEST NERVES SPECIALISTS



LOF A WAY 2 PASS



1-2-1 zoom sessions for Part 2/3/SC nerves

Do you 'freeze' and can't get your words out, or try to get 40 hours of training into one sentence? If nerves get the better of you on the day, or you lack confidence in your ability, this two-hour session will enable you to keep calm, focused, and confident.

You will benefit from..

- Understanding how you 'create' negative emotions
- Techniques to keep you calm
- Control your emotions rather than them controlling you
- Full access to the online course
- Strategies to bring your best performance when it matters
- Suitable for part 2,3 and Standard Check

Keep Calm Quiz

This is a brand new FREE resource to help you to engage with your learners, enabling you to analyse their behaviours, emotions, physical sensations and thoughts that may hinder their progress when learning to driving and taking their test. Depending on the results, we have a range of resources to help you to help them.

Why not take the quiz yourself? If you answer mostly 'A' then you have good control of your emotions, and so long as you are trained to the required standard, you should be successful. If it's mostly 'B' then you may just need a nudge in the right direction. If it's 'C', then you may be controlled by your emotions, and this could prove challenging in passing your part 2/3 or SC, so why not get in touch to see how we can help?



[Take the quiz](#)



HELP Appeal: improving emergency care beyond hospital helipads

When people hear about the HELP Appeal, many immediately think of lifesaving NHS hospital helipads that enable air ambulances to land directly at hospitals, dramatically improving patient outcomes in emergencies. While this remains a cornerstone of its mission, the charity's impact extends far beyond helipads. The HELP Appeal is also a vital funder of another essential resource in emergency care: critical care cars.

Advancing emergency care beyond the helipad

Critical care cars are a lifeline for emergency medical teams, ensuring rapid response times and the highest level of care for patients in urgent need. They provide support when helicopters can't fly due to inclement weather or when an incident has occurred in a built-up area where a helicopter cannot land. They ensure specialist teams reach patients quickly, no matter the circumstances. Each car represents not just a vehicle, but a crucial piece of a larger emergency care network that saves lives across the country. The HELP Appeal has funded over 30 to date with more in the pipeline.

Hospital grade treatment at the scene

Equipped with advanced medical equipment and staffed by air ambulance teams, or volunteer emergency medics (from the British Association for Immediate Care, who support the ambulance service in critical incidents), these vehicles bring hospital grade treatment directly to the scene. In many cases, this rapid intervention can mean the difference between life and death, whether it's responding to a major road traffic collision, a cardiac arrest or a complex trauma in an urban environment.



Filling in vital gaps in emergency services

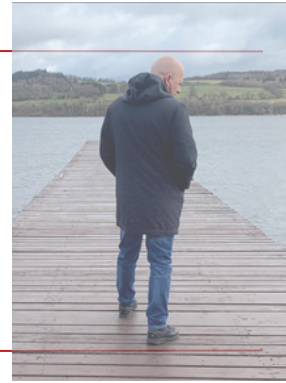
The HELP Appeal's funding of these vehicles reflects a deep understanding of the challenges faced by emergency services. Helicopters, while extremely fast, are not always available, especially during poor weather conditions. Moreover, urban environments often pose logistical issues that make helicopter landings impossible. Critical care cars step in to fill this vital gap, ensuring that no matter the time or place, expert medical help is never too far away.

In extending their support beyond helipads, the HELP Appeal demonstrates its wide-ranging support for emergency care charities, going wherever it is needed to ensure more lives are saved. Through the continued funding of critical care cars, they ensure that support is not only airborne, but always accessible, regardless of the terrain or weather.

To find out more and support the HELP Appeal, which has funded 55 NHS hospital helipads to date, with 40 more in the pipeline, please visit: www.helpappeal.org.uk

MEET THE INSTRUCTOR :

William Marshall



Name: William Marshall

Birthday (year optional 🗓️): 27th December 1969

Occupation: Approved Driving Instructor

Current Car: Peugeot 3008

Dream car: Porsche Carrera



Favourite lesson: Show me tell me (only joking) just love teaching, probably country roads

Least favourite part of your job: Cancellations and tax returns

What annoys you: drivers tooting at learners

What part of your job do you enjoy: It's not an easy job, self-development makes the job more rewarding, working for myself is also satisfying.



Most memorable moment in your current role: Qualifying and meeting the standards,



Funniest moments in your role: Awe lots of laughs, too many

Biggest influence on your career: My partner always believed in me even when I did not, my trainer/mentor Rosemary.

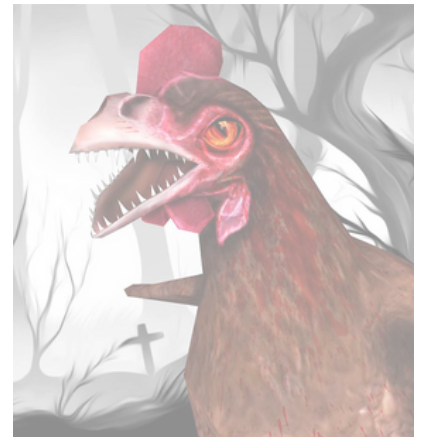
Professional ambition: To be the best version of me and help as many learners as possible.

Personal ambition: To be able to teach my grandson to drive (he's 4)I'm getting older though

At the end of a working day, how do you wind down: A swim and a sauna, Walking & staying healthy.

Hobbies and interests: A swim and a sauna, Walking & staying healthy

Favourite food: Chicken



Favourite film: Pulp Fiction



What music do you like to listen to: Coldplay

If you weren't a (driving instructor), what would you be?
An Astronaut !



If you could meet anyone...Benson boon (my grandson loves him 🤔)
Or Chris Martin of Coldplay, interesting guy

If you won the lottery...? probably retire in the sun and play golf with my crocs on



BUSINESS - The Importance of Committing to Further Development as a Driving Instructor

Mick Knowles is the Co-Founder and Business Development Manager of K.I.T., the host of The DID Podcast (now The KIT Podcast), and owner of Xpert Driver Training Ltd. In 2013 he completed the BTEC Level 3 in Coaching for Driver Development followed in 2014 by the BTEC Level 4 in Coaching for Driver Development and has since gone on to become a Tri-Coaching Trainer. He is accredited by Cranfield University to deliver 'Driver Metrics' psychometric profiling behavioural change courses. Mick's desire to develop not only himself but other ADI's has led to the formation of KIT. In 2021 due to his love of podcasts he launched The DID Podcast. In 2021 he was runner up in the Influencer of the Year Category at the GoRoadie Awards and Xpert Driver Training were runners up in the Regional Driving School of The Year Category at the Intelligent Instructor Awards.



**MICK
KNOWLES
(FOUNDER)**



Being a driving instructor is much more than just teaching someone how to parallel park or navigate busy streets. It's about instilling confidence, ensuring safety, and helping students develop the necessary skills to become responsible drivers. As a professional in this field, it's essential to stay committed to ongoing development, both for personal growth and for the benefit of your students.

One of the most significant reasons to commit to further development is the ever-evolving nature of road safety and driving laws. Regulations, technologies, and best practices change over time, and it's important for instructors to stay informed. For instance, new driving laws or changes in vehicle technology—such as the rise of electric vehicles—can impact how we teach students. Staying up-to-date with these shifts ensures that you're teaching the most relevant, current information to your students.

Furthermore, developing as an instructor goes beyond just updating knowledge of road laws. It's about refining your coaching methods. Every student learns differently, and as an instructor, you need to be adaptable.

By committing to personal development, you can improve your communication, find new ways to explain complex concepts, and develop a coaching style that resonates with different types of learners. This adaptability can make all the difference in helping students grasp difficult concepts and gain confidence behind the wheel.

Another aspect of development is maintaining a high level of patience and empathy. Driving can be a stressful experience for many learners, and an instructor's ability to remain calm and patient can help to reduce anxiety. Continuing to improve in areas such as emotional intelligence and conflict resolution will not only improve the learning experience for your students, but it will also make your job more enjoyable and fulfilling.

Additionally, committing to further development can open up more opportunities within the industry. Whether it's expanding your qualifications, offering specialized courses like defensive driving, or pursuing accreditation in different driving programs, continual learning can help you stand out in a competitive market. It also enhances your professional reputation and builds trust with your students.

S.E.N. Revolutions - Help with Worrying for those with ADHD

Julia Pistrucci Malkin is autistic with ADHD, dyslexia, dyscalculia, and mental health difficulties to add to the collection. Despite all of these conditions she has a PhD from the University of Leicester plus 3 other degrees. The Doctorate and Masters Degrees both include autism-related materials and research. Julia was the first Approved Driving Instructor to qualify with a diagnosis of Autism. She has taken 6 Advanced Driving Tests, is a member of the Institute of Master Tutors of Driving and winner of 2019 Intelligent Instructor Awards 'Special Needs Provider of The Year'. Julia was awarded an MBE from HM the Queen in the New Year's Honours List in 2011 for Services to people with special needs



**JULIA
MALKIN
M.B.E.**



It can be a problem when instructors identify motivation problems that ADHD people could have. I have ADHD, and absolutely get worried sick if I'm trying to do something new – especially when I feel that I'm trying on my own!

Many people under the Neurodiversity Umbrella have problems with motivation, and these problems vary from one person to another.

Look out for our behaviour patterns when starting a new task. Many of us will be afraid that something could go wrong.

This could be shown in different ways – of which worry is number one.

Worry. This could be the number one ADHD emotional response when a new task is mentioned, started or discussed. *Can I do it? What if something goes wrong? What if I can't keep my concentration going?* These are the questions many ADHD people are thinking about...

These thoughts can circle around for hours. Worry can keep us awake at night; put us off our food and much more! If a goal is set which is perceived by us as being too big ADHD people can often get emotional.

We often worry about how large a task could be. Even small things, we can think – *is it too big for me?* Many ADHD people can feel daunted by a task – what seems simple to many can be like climbing Mount Everest to some of us, and the emotions can be overwhelming.

If we get overwhelmed we could lose emotional control. Many have fear of getting upset in front of others which can put them off starting anything new.

With ADHD, it's important to know the brain is doing two things at once –

- It's trying its hardest to focus on the task.
- It's also trying its hardest to reduce the amount of negative thoughts – including worry!

That's why a simple task is much bigger for us as ADHD people. We have to hang on tightly to our emotions, and try not to let the worries put us off our tasks, as well as trying to do the task itself.

Ask us how we view the task itself. The perceptions ADHD people can have towards a task can vary – some want to 'get on with it' to reduce the stress, while others voice their fears about trying it, especially if they feel they will be on their own.

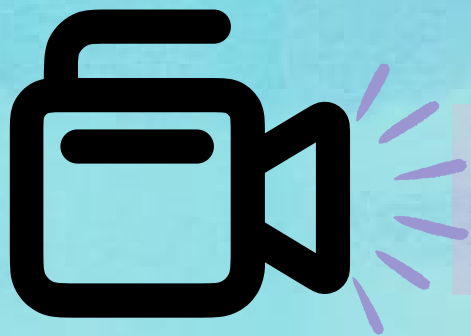
Ask us what emotions a task brings up in our heads. We need as much positivity as possible. This means constant encouragement and sometimes a celebration of accomplishments, even the simplest ones.

ADHD is real and it's in your car!

Dr Julia Malkin MBE



Sign up Here



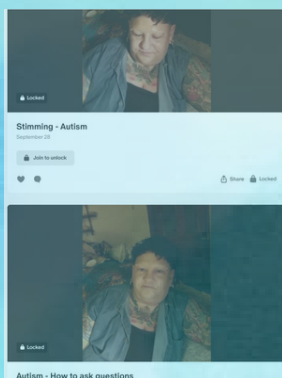
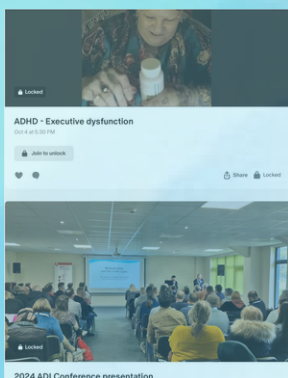
Be part of something good.

Talking

SEND

With

Dr Julia Malkin MBE



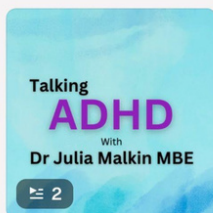
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By joining this tier you will gain access to all videos. These are short videos covering a variety of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. You will also have the option to ask questions and make requests for videos on topics you would like more information on.



Talking ADHD



Talking Autism



Dyscalculia



Personal Passions

Do you want to be part of something good?

Dr Julia Malkin M.B.E. has put together the perfect tool for instructors to develop their knowledge and understanding of S.E.N.

Her video subscription site houses a unique collection of videos that you can work through from your own home and develop your skills!

And the collections continue to grow! With more content added regularly

Do you know how to help learners with additional needs?

These videos will explain what it might look like and how you can help!

Learn from someone who has 7 of these conditions, a PHD studying it and is a qualified driving instructor!!

Ray Seagrave

The Most Difficult People to Teach – Do They Really Exist?

Hi its Ray! I'm a highly respected trainer in the driver training industry, a DVSA grade 'A' ADI and grade 'A' (51/51) ORDIT registered trainer. I'm an accredited coach and mentor with the IAPC&M. I'm commitment to personal and professional development of ADI's and PDI's in the industry with the aim of being a motivational mentor. My courses and 1:2:1 coaching and mentoring training sessions are among the most popular in the industry. Furthermore, I am a notable speaker at key industry events, including Intelligent Instructor and delivering ADINJC masterclasses. My insights on latest trends and innovative techniques make me a trusted information source in this evolving industry. My dedication to uplift the standard of driver education remains unwavering. My diverse accomplishments and consistent drive to enhance driver training make me a true industry leader Ray Seagrave.



**RAY
SEAGRAVE**



Every instructor has had that lesson where they've thought, This pupil is impossible.

Maybe they're not listening. Maybe they seem to be making the same mistakes over and over. Maybe they're unmotivated, overconfident, anxious, argumentative – or all of the above.

It's easy to fall into the trap of labelling someone as “a difficult pupil”. But when we stop and think about it, is there such a thing? Or is “difficult” really just a sign that our current approach isn't connecting with this person in this moment?

The answer may be uncomfortable, but here it is: in most cases, there's no such thing as a universally difficult pupil. What we're really facing is a pupil whose learning needs, beliefs, or behaviours don't match our usual way of teaching – yet.

The Myth of the “Difficult Pupil”

When instructors get together – whether it's in a training session, over a coffee, or in an online group – the same types of pupils come up again and again:

The overconfident but under-skilled learner.

The one who doesn't want to be there.

The nervous and hesitant driver. The easily distracted daydreamer.

The one with strong opinions about “how driving should be done” (usually from a relative).

We describe them as “hard work”, “draining”, “a nightmare to teach”. But here's the thing – those exact same pupils might be someone else's easiest and most rewarding to teach. The difference? The instructor's approach.

What feels “difficult” to us often just means:

Their learning style, mindset, or circumstances don't fit the way we usually teach.

Why We Label Pupils as Difficult

Labelling a pupil as “difficult” is rarely about them being unteachable. More often, it's because:

We haven't fully understood their perspective yet.
We may have asked questions, but we haven't uncovered the why behind their behaviour.

Their learning needs are very different from the last dozen pupils we've taught.

If we've had a run of confident, quick learners, a slow, hesitant pupil can feel like a gear change – and vice versa.

Ray Seagrave

The Most Difficult People to Teach – Do They Really Exist?

Hi its Ray! I'm a highly respected trainer in the driver training industry, a DVSA grade 'A' ADI and grade 'A' (51/51) ORDIT registered trainer. I'm an accredited coach and mentor with the IAPC&M. I'm commitment to personal and professional development of ADI's and PDI's in the industry with the aim of being a motivational mentor. My courses and 1:2:1 coaching and mentoring training sessions are among the most popular in the industry. Furthermore, I am a notable speaker at key industry events, including Intelligent Instructor and delivering ADINJC masterclasses. My insights on latest trends and innovative techniques make me a trusted information source in this evolving industry. My dedication to uplift the standard of driver education remains unwavering. My diverse accomplishments and consistent drive to enhance driver training make me a true industry leader
Ray Seagrave.



**RAY
SEAGRAVE**

We're human, too.
Sometimes we're tired, distracted, or not in the right headspace.
Patience runs low, and frustration creeps in.

We've hit the edge of our current skill set.
Every instructor has a comfort zone. A "difficult" pupil is often a sign we've reached ours – and need to expand it.

The Pupil Profiles That Push Our Buttons

Let's look at some of the "classic" types of pupils that instructors often call difficult – and see why they might feel that way.

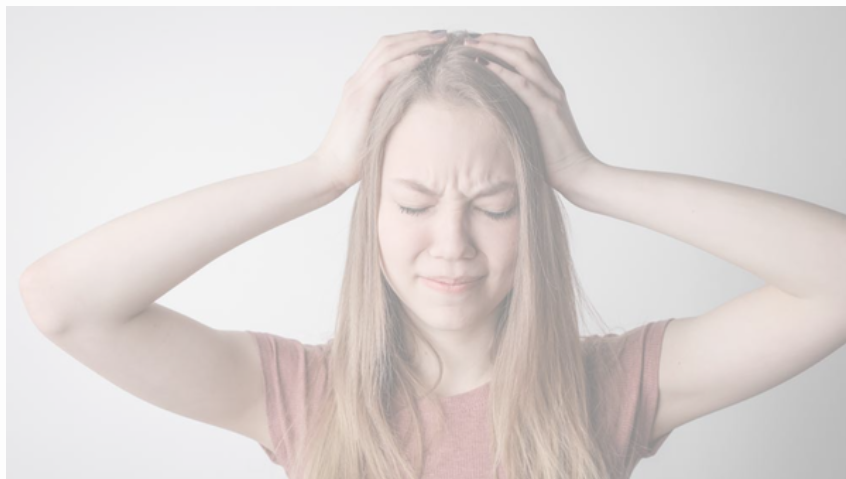
1. The Overconfident Beginner

They think they can already drive. They'll tell you their dad said they're "a natural" or they've "been driving tractors for years".
They push ahead before mastering the basics and resist feedback.

Why they feel difficult: Their self-image as a good driver clashes with your responsibility to manage risk and build skills in the right order.

2. The Nervous Avoider

They're hesitant, worried about making mistakes, and prefer to avoid challenges. Progress feels slow, and lessons can stall when they freeze in new situations.



Why they feel difficult: You need to break learning into tiny, manageable steps – and their fear means you may have to revisit the same ground several times.

3. The Passenger

They're learning because someone else told them to – not because they want to.
They turn up, but the effort's minimal.

Why they feel difficult: Motivation is almost entirely external, so progress depends on helping them find their own reasons to learn.

4. The Rule Bender

They know the Highway Code – but see it as optional. They'll say, "No one really does 30 here," or "Everyone rolls through this junction."

Why they feel difficult: You're not just teaching skills – you're challenging beliefs and habits that may go back years.

5. The Easily Distracted

They lose focus quickly – by scenery, conversation, their own thoughts, or even the next lesson they've got after this one.

Why they feel difficult: You need to work harder to keep their attention in the present moment while still letting them take in the bigger picture.

The Common Thread – It's Not About the Pupil

While these profiles look very different, the underlying issue is the same:

Our usual teaching approach doesn't work for them – yet.

That doesn't mean we're doing something "wrong". It means this is the moment to adapt. In fact, it's often these pupils that help us grow most as instructors.

SPEED OF PROCESSING

I'm Pennie Alexander, I qualified in 2014 after being a gymnastics coach for about 15 years. I still teach learners, I train PDIs, and I work full-time as a driving assessor ensuring people with medical conditions are safe to continue driving and help those with disabilities discover which adaptations they will require to get on the road.



**PENNIE
ALEXANDER**



In the last article I spoke about sequencing and coordination, explaining how our brains are like sponges absorbing information as we grow. The sponge absorbs the fluid filling it to capacity, then the excess fluid leaks out, the speed at which this happens depends on how quickly the sponge is filled. Equating this to learning, as we age, retaining information becomes more difficult, if we overload our brain with information, it just floods back out, so we don't remember what we tried to learn.

We need to be able to process information, understand and reason it, so learning in segments allows the time to absorb the information. If we use information we already know, then the learning is simplified. We're rearranging the information to make it more understandable.

Speed of processing is the time it takes to perform a cognitive task. This can vary from person to person and does not mean a person is more intelligent than another if their processing speed is faster. It is simply the time it takes an individual to be given information and to understand that information sufficiently to be able to use and apply it (Cognifit.com, 2025).

We process different information in different ways, we may be quicker to process the written word, rather than the spoken and vice versa. We may benefit from seeing something or doing something, rather than simply reading or listening. Knowing how we process information easily will help learning take place at a faster pace.

If an individual is slow at processing information, their ability to drive may be affected. This doesn't necessarily mean they cannot drive, but they may have to adjust their driving to be able to cope with the speed of travel.

How many new learners have you had that think driving at 10mph is like driving at lightning speed? They're too scared to put the car into 2nd gear as it's too fast!

Before learning to drive, the fastest some people may have travelled is on a bicycle. Yes, they've been in cars, or buses, but they haven't been in control. Some may have never used a bike, so the fastest they have ever experienced is running, probably a maximum of 4 or 5mph! Therefore, when they get in a car for the first time and start moving at 10mph they find it frightening. Their brain is struggling to process the information as it hasn't had to work at that speed previously.

Ideally you want to allow them to increase their speed according to their ability, occasionally they may need encouragement for this to happen, particularly if they are very nervous. Allow this to happen naturally so make sure you're in an environment where other road users won't be affected, or have space to pass. Keeping them in quiet areas so they can concentrate on each skill without too many interruptions and find out by talking to them what will help them learn each skill: reading about it, discussing it, looking at visual aids, watching it (demonstration, YouTube). If you've tried one method and they are struggling, suggest something else.

I've had many learners say they don't want a demonstration when trying to work out how to navigate a particular roundabout near me, we'll exhaust all avenues and eventually they'll agree to watch me drive it. When I do this, we'll discuss how they want the demonstration, with a full talk through, a partial talk through or in silence, depending on their needs and what might help them best. This is often the final piece in the jigsaw for them and everything falls into place.

SPEED OF PROCESSING

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ALEXANDER**



If we become overloaded it becomes very difficult to process the information ahead of us. We may not hear what is being said, as our brain “switches off” unnecessary senses, to enable us to deal with the immediate threat (as seen to the brain). Thus, if you’ve had a learner that suddenly appears to ignore everything you are saying to them, they may well be in Flight mode, they may require physical intervention to bring them back to thinking mode. If this does occur, it’s important to discuss what happened, find out their concerns or fears regarding the situation and take a step back in their training. For more information on the fright, flight, freeze and fawn responses contact Confident Drivers with Kev and Tracey Field.

There are medical conditions that may affect the speed at which we process information; stroke, dementias, head injuries, and learning disorders; ADHD, Autism, Dyslexia, Dyscalculia, Dyspraxia.

People with slower processing may take longer to learn, some may struggle with certain things on their journey of learning to drive and some may not be able to drive, as they cannot process the information required at a fast enough pace to be safe on the road.

When teaching people to drive, be patient with them, allow them to grasp the initial skills of clutch control (if in a manual vehicle), moving off, stopping, steering and positioning, gradually. This will ensure they have processed what is required of them and can understand and reason why they need to do certain things. Don’t just assume that they will be able to control the car at 30mph after moving the car two or three times. Yes, they need stretching out of their comfort zone, but ensuring the basic skills are in place, will make both their journey and yours much easier and happier.

We all know, or should know about commentary driving, say what you see, say what you reasonably expect to happen and say what you’re going to do. “There’s a horse-muck in the road, I could expect a horse and rider around the bend, I’m going to slow down just in case” or something along those lines. I’m going to get you to do a different commentary. As you’re approaching a situation let’s say a junction to turn left, check to see what’s happening behind you,

then ask yourself out loud
“anything behind you?” then check again, tell yourself, “release the gas”

then do it; “indicate left” then do it; “brake gently” then do it; “off the brake, clutch down” then do it;

“select 2 nd gear” then do it; “off the clutch” then do it; “look into the junction and steer” then do it!

Did you manage it? How difficult was it? How long did it take you? Now add in the fact that a learner needs to hear what you are saying, process that information, think about what they actually need to do, and then do it.

My final question is: Are you giving your learner enough time when you give them an instruction?

To test your own processing skills, scan the QR code to join Cognifit.com and see if you can improve your cognition.

WHICH SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS SHOULD I USE TO PROMOTE MY DRIVING SCHOOL?

Alison Harper has worked in social media marketing for over ten years, marketing several UK-based organisations, such as volunteer centres, community cafés, car-parts suppliers, artists, authors, insurance brokers, mental health organisations, word artists, beauticians, driving schools and more. She provides specialist marketing services on Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok.



**ALISON
HARPER**



Choosing the right social media platforms to promote your driving school can make a big difference in reaching your target audience effectively. The platforms differ in many ways, so selecting the ones that align with your business goals and audience preferences is key. I'm going to give a breakdown of the main platforms that my clients use. If you don't have much time, focus on only one or two.

1. Facebook-

Facebook is an excellent platform for reaching a wide audience, including teens, parents, and adults looking to learn to drive. With over two billion users, it offers an accessible way to showcase your driving school, share updates, and interact with your local community.

Key features for your driving school on Facebook include:

- Page: Create a page where you can list areas covered, services, hours, contact information, and reviews. Post test passes, tips, theory questions and updates.
- Groups: Join or create local groups where people might seek driving lessons.
- Profile: You can use your profile alongside your page, to interact with your audience.

2. Instagram

Instagram is ideal for connecting with a younger audience, including teens and young adults, who make up many driving school clients. Content can be posted in various formats:

- Photos and Videos: Share images of your cars, instructors, and students celebrating milestones like passing their driving tests.
- Stories and Reels: Use Stories and Reels to share tips on safe driving, updates about your school, or "day-in-the-life" snippets of driving lessons.

-Hashtag and keywords: Use local and relevant hashtags and keywords to boost visibility, like #DrivingSchool or #LearnToDrive, along with Geotags to target areas.

3. TikTok

TikTok's popularity among teens and young adults makes it an ideal choice for promoting a driving school. By creating short, engaging videos with quick driving tips, myth-busting content, or "first driving lesson" stories, you can catch the attention of young drivers. Content formats can vary between stories, short-form videos and long-form videos.

4. Google Business Profile

A Google Business Profile is a powerful tool that can significantly boost your business's online visibility, especially in local searches. By creating a profile, you will allow your driving school to appear on Google Search and Maps, making it easy for potential clients to find essential information like your contact details, location, hours, and services. Since many people rely on Google to find local services, an optimised Google Business Profile can attract more clients and enhance your business's credibility, helping you stand out among competitors, plus a GBP will help with local SEO.

Each platform has unique strengths, so leveraging a combination of Facebook for local outreach, Instagram for visuals, TikTok for engaging, fun snippets and Google Business Profile for local SEO can create a balanced, effective social media strategy. Focusing on these channels will help you connect with prospective students and their families, ultimately growing your driving school's presence and credibility.

REFLECTING AND MIRRORS?

Terry has been an ADI for over 25 years and an ADI/PDI trainer for over 14 years. He holds a qualification as a Professional Driver Coach and delivers online and in-car training workshops based on his extensive knowledge of coaching. He scored the perfect 51/51 on his latest ORDIT inspection. He is an International Authority for Professional Coaches and Mentors Accredited Coach and a Tricres trained business coach and runs his own business/personal coaching company, Done Stressing. Using his expertise to help his clients discover a clear pathway forwards on a personal and business level.



**TERRY
LEFTERI**



Hope you've all had a great few weeks and the longer days have put a spring - not apologising for that amazing pun :) - in your step.

I've been having an interesting messenger conversation with an ADI I've been supporting/mentoring for the past couple of years. They have a feeling that they're failing their students. They could be doing things differently, better. They feel they still don't fully understand the differences with 'instructor-led training' & 'client-led training' 'Why do other instructors get better results than me?'

They felt this way after a 'non-productive, no learning took place' lesson where the learner told them that they 'got nothing' from the lesson. I'm sure we've all had lessons like that, right? I know I have.

The interesting thing about this conversation is that when I asked the ADI for evidence that no learning had taken place or that their client had 'got nothing' from the lesson, the ADI couldn't give me any evidence. When they thought about it they realised actually 'she did take something away' Learning doesn't necessarily show itself in improved skills-based ability. Learning can be a realisation, a eureka moment. It can be a deeper understanding of a concept. A better understanding or how something feels or a thought process. I think that's a really important thing to remember while we are reflecting on the sessions you give (you do reflect on your sessions, don't you? If you don't, you'll need to stay behind for detention!)

We'd all love it if someone suddenly starts checking mirrors, seeing signs, approaches at the correct speed etc but that shouldn't be the only judge of if they have learnt anything. So next time you think that you're not getting through to someone or they 'just don't get it' remember to not just look at the physical skills. Ask them about understanding. Awareness of what they think about or how they feel about this 'skill' they can't get.

A response like 'It's frustrating me' IS learning. In fact, that's brilliantly insightful learning because then you can help them to deal with that frustration. How it's affecting their ability to perform? How will they deal with frustration when driving post-test? That's incredible raised awareness for any learner.

What also struck me about the conversation was how unfair they were being with themselves. This is something that often comes up with my coaching clients. The language they were using (and I'm not talking Gordon Ramsey language) was a tell-tale sign. Some of the words used were 'terrible' 'I'm still not seeing' 'irritated' 'struggling' & 'feeling really flattened'. These were words they were using to describe themselves.

Whenever you are reflecting on your own performance it's really important to be kind to yourself too. Something to think about is would you talk to your best friend like that? If your best friend asked you for some advice, how would you speak to them? If you're not speaking to yourself as you would your best friend, you're not being kind to yourself....or fair. It makes a real difference if you're being kind to yourself. It helps you see both sides of the story rather than just how rubbish you might be. There's always two sides to a story. So next time you wonder if you're doing a good job or you're putting yourself down take a moment, and I'm talking any life situation, not just in car. Reflection is vital for learning to take place but ask yourself, where is the evidence (feelings don't count as evidence) and are you being kind to yourself....unless you dropped your fav mug on your toe and it really hurt,

then you can be Gordon Ramsey as much as you like!

Until next time.....have fun!



FROM BEHIND THE MIC

Terry Cook is content creator and developer of the industry leading 'The Instructor Podcast'. His commitment to delivering high quality CPD content for ADIs and PDIs has seen him rapidly raise in to one of the most prominent figures in our industry. His platform continues to grow and Terry continues to add value through his widely acclaimed podcast.



**TERRY
COOK
THE INSTRUCTOR
PODCAST**



Every November, the road safety charity Brake runs Road Safety Week, and this year's focus is on safe vehicles.

It runs from the 16th to the 23rd of November, and the theme is simple but powerful: every time we get in a vehicle, we should be as safe as possible – whoever we are, and however we travel. Because safe vehicles save lives.

Brake has been around since the mid-90s. They work with families who've lost loved ones in crashes and campaign to make our roads safer. Honest, their very existence is a reminder that we still have a huge problem on our roads. In an ideal world, Brake wouldn't need to exist at all, because people wouldn't be dying on roads.

So, what's all this got to do with us? Well, we spend our days in cars. We sit beside the next generation of drivers and help shape how they think about driving, not just how to pass the test, but how to drive safely for the rest of their lives. That's a massive responsibility, and it's one we sometimes forget when we're bogged down in manoeuvres and mirror checks.

The truth is, we should already be talking about road safety every single week. But campaigns like this give us a reason to shout louder and engage people in a slightly different way.

Brake's pushing its "Big Tea Break" fundraiser this year, the idea's simple: have a brew, raise a few quid, and talk about road safety. It's something instructors could easily weave into their week. Stop for a tea or coffee with your learners, have a five-minute chat about what makes a vehicle safe, and maybe donate the price of the drink to Brake. Small thing, but it keeps the conversation going.

When we talk about "safe vehicles," most people think about seatbelts and air bags, but there's far more to it. Modern cars are packed with tech, autonomous emergency braking, lane assist, adaptive cruise control, even SOS buttons. All brilliant features when used properly, but they can also make people complacent. The more the car does, the less attention some drivers pay. That's where we come in. We should be showing learners what

this stuff does, how it works, and where it can go wrong. It's not about scaring them; it's about helping them understand that technology can save lives, but it can't replace good judgement.

And while we're at it, we could all do with reframing the "Show Me, Tell Me" questions. They're not exam trivia; they're practical safety checks. Show them what the central three-quarters of a tyre actually means. Explain why they shouldn't wait until the legal limit to change tyres. Encourage them to take thirty seconds to walk round their car before they drive off. It's not about ticking boxes; it's about building habits that keep people alive.

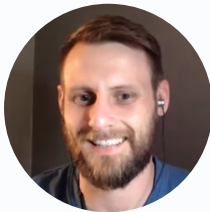
We don't need to reinvent the wheel for Road Safety Week, but it's a good excuse to remind ourselves why we do what we do. If we see ourselves as genuine road safety professionals, and we should, then let's act like it. Use your lessons, your social media, your chats with parents and PDIs. Talk about safe vehicles, talk about the tech, talk about the basics.

Keep the message simple:
safe vehicles save lives.

So maybe call at a Costa, have that chat, and keep raising standards.

Mirrors Signal *Pink* K.I.T.

Josh Holleran is the host of the YouTube Channel "Mirrors, Signal, Podcast." MSP gives insights into the Driving Instructor industry through sharing the stories of recently qualified instructors and knowledge from industry leading experts. As someone who is leading the industry in communication and delivering his message and the message of others in our industry and with a focus on Potential and Newly qualified PDIs...Who better to partner us for Mirrors Signal - Pink KIT!



JOSH HOLLERHAN
MIRRORS SIGNAL
PODCAST

I have been looking at the term 'adapt' for some time now. I think it has become an overused buzzword that can sometimes cause confusion, especially for trainee instructors if used without specific context. We should always be looking to adapt our approach to learners but I don't think we should be waiting for a fault to happen so we can adapt the lesson.

Lee and Mick kindly agreed to join me on a podcast episode to discuss this and how we can go beyond fault focused training. Here are some of the takeaways from the episode that might add more context to the word adapt.

Every learner is unique, and as an instructor, it's our job to identify and adapt to their learning styles. Some learners may respond well to verbal instructions, while others might need visual aids or hands-on practice. Understanding these differences and tailoring our approach accordingly can make a big difference to our pupils progress. This is something I can become complacent with at times, falling back into teaching how I want to teach instead of how the learner best learns. Some examples of this might be a demonstration drive, drawings or commentary drive, you might also find that some learners want to just have a go and experiment with the skills. We need to find the best way to help the learner, in a safe environment and adapt our approach accordingly.

Setting positive, achievable goals will continuously have us adapting to the pupils needs. This isn't waiting for a fault to happen but structuring the lesson effectively to aid with learning



If we minimise the risk, set a positive goal, that will give the learner focus on what is needed without trying to do too much or something that is out of their reach, we can then make small tweaks to the lesson as needed to increase / reduce the challenge. Adapting in this instance could be – The pupils' goal is to manage their speed on approach to roundabouts, initially we might start with prompts, the next goal might be they do it independently. That is an adaption, if we continue giving prompts when they are not needed, we will be over instructing and not adapting to the pupils needs right now. Knowing your learner, listening to your learner and watching them perform the task they are doing will help you adapt your approach to their needs and set the next goal.

We also discussed the importance of adapting the training area and route based on your pupils goals and needs. If a pupil is struggling with a particular area, it might be necessary to move to a less challenging environment to build their confidence. Conversely, if a pupil is doing well, you could introduce more challenging routes to keep them engaged and progressing. For example, if your pupil is making too many mistakes in a busy area, consider moving to a quieter location where they can focus on the skill they need at that moment in time. On the other hand, if they are finding the current route too easy, introduce more complex scenarios to challenge them and enhance their skills. Selecting the right area is key for your part 3 test, make sure it is suitable for your pupil but also has the option to move onto less / more challenging areas based on your pupil and their current level. This way your lesson can naturally flow with what the learner needs.

Adapting doesn't have to be a negative and we should always be adapting to our learners needs, perhaps a better word would be flowing and always be in the moment on lessons.

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