

## CrowdWish

**1a SPEAKING** Are any of these wishes things you would also wish for? Work with a partner and decide on the best three wishes.

*I wish the Nigerian government would do more about the missing schoolgirls.*

*I wish for a half decent boyfriend.*

I wish that I could take my family on a road trip across America.

**I wish bullying would stop.**

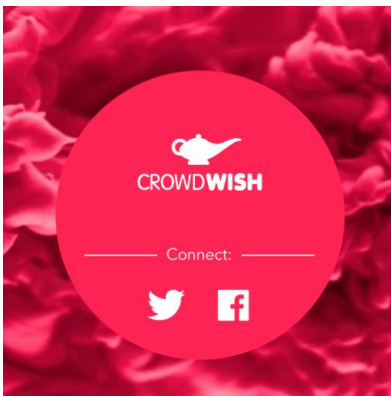
I wish people would smile more.

I wish I could give my friend, who lives in another country, a hug on her birthday.

*I wish I knew my neighbours better.*

**1b** Talk to another pair and explain the reasons for your choices.

**2a** Look at the photo for a new online service, CrowdWish. What kind of service do you think they provide? Discuss in a small group.



**2b READING** Now read the text and check your ideas.

### Just <sup>1</sup>wishful thinking?

Ever wished you could have <sup>2</sup>a **dream come true**? Now maybe you can, with the start of a new website, CrowdWish. Users post their wishes to the site and every day people vote on the best wish, then CrowdWish grant the winning wish. Sounds <sup>3</sup>**too good to be true**? If the wish is something that can't be completely granted, such as, 'I wish people would smile more' CrowdWish will do something practical to at least take <sup>4</sup>**a step in the right direction**. For example, to grant this wish, they put up funny signs in the London Underground. If the wish is for a product of some sort, CrowdWish will find a company happy to donate the item in return for the free publicity. See? It works <sup>5</sup>**like magic**!

Bill Griffin, the founder of CrowdWish, started the website in January 2014, and it seems to be <sup>6</sup>**going from strength to strength**, with thousands of people signed up already.

**3a VOCABULARY** Match the definitions below (a-f) with the idioms in the text (1-6)

- A Becoming more and more successful
- B When you cannot believe something is as good as it seems.
- C Very effective and successful.
- D The belief that something you want to happen will happen, even though this is not actually likely.
- E A wish or hope becoming reality.
- F Beginning to make a positive change.



**4 VIDEO** Watch the video (up to 5.24) of Bill Griffin, the founder of CrowdWish, talking about his website and number the following sections as you hear them.



- The belief that the more people work together, the more likely they are to get what they want
- The idea that if you want something, so will someone else.
- An example of how CrowdWish responded to a serious wish.
- The importance of doing something real and practical about the wishes.
- The idea that everyone, rich or poor, has dreams, wishes, hopes and desires.
- An example of how CrowdWish responded to a funny or 'tongue in cheek' wish.

**5 GRAMMAR** Read the grammar explanation in the box, then rewrite the sentences using wish.

What we wish is always contrary to existing facts. To show that it is unreal, the tense moves back one step.

*I don't know my neighbours very well – I wish I **knew** my neighbours better.*

*I can't take my family on a road trip across America- I wish I **could** take my family on a road trip across America.*

*I'm so tired- I wish I **were** less tired* (Note that we often use 'were' not 'was' in hypothetical constructions)

We also do this for past wishes, or regrets

*I didn't work hard at school – I wish I **had worked** harder at school.*

When we want someone else to change their behaviour, we use 'would'.

*I wish the Nigerian government **would** do more about the missing schoolgirls.*

*I wish people **would** smile more.*

- 1 I want you to stop being late. I wish.....
- 2 I don't have any money. I wish.....
- 3 I've lost my wallet. I wish.....
- 4 He isn't in my class. I wish.....
- 5 Please sit down. I wish...
- 6 I broke my leg skiing. I wish....

**6 SPEAKING** What wishes would you like to submit to the CrowdWish site? Write 5 wishes, then work in small groups to choose the best three.



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## Transcript

This is a business that launched in January of this year so it's been going for ten or eleven months now I suppose. And it was based on a very simple observation, I suppose, of seeing more and more groups of people coming together online to create outcomes for themselves that they wouldn't have been able to achieve had they just been solo individuals plugging away on their own. And that's something you can see manifest examples of everywhere. And I guess aside from the kind of tech piece it comes back to a basic human observation, er, about all of us. Everyone on earth has hopes, dreams, desires, aspirations whatever they might be. It might be a material thing, it might be a service that you require, it might be an experience you'd like, it could be a cause that you believe in, it might be a specific piece of advice that you need, absolutely anything. Everybody has those things, from a shoeless orphan in Tanzania to the world's most affluent hedge fund manager. That's the first kind of observation I suppose on which the business was predicated.

The second thing is, whatever it is that you're hoping for, someone else, somewhere, is gonna want the same thing. And, increasingly, the fact that you may be separated by an ocean or live in opposing parts of the world is becoming less and less important for reasons that we all understand. So that was the second observation.

The third observation is that the more people who want something, the more likely that thing is to manifest. Many voices are louder than one, and the louder a voice is, the more impossible that voice becomes to ignore. So I was thinking about it for a while and I was thinking, wouldn't it be good if there was a space, a dedicated space, where you could go online, to post and share with the world the things you most wanted.

And I messed around with that conceptually for a while and it kind of ended up, paradoxically ended up, feeling slightly lame and a bit empty and like an echo chamber for half remembered ambitions or forgotten dreams that people had. And so I was thinking to myself, 'How can we kinetically energize this thing?' 'How can we make it something that feels like a place rather than wistful ambitions that may or may not be achieved, something real and meaningful.'

You can see here, there's a chart, and this goes on in a limitless..as I say we've done something every 24 hours since the 4<sup>th</sup> January this year. And the journey of a thousand miles starts with a single step. So, don't get me wrong, it isn't some kind of miraculous, Disney style, we'll make all your dreams come true app, it's the absolute antithesis of that. What we're saying is, if you have this aspiration, don't just have it as a kind of wistful, metaphysical thing in the back of your head. We're here to help you actually make some progress towards it. And so, whatever it is, and we've done 325 of them to date, every day since the 4<sup>th</sup> January, whatever it is you're wishing for, there's something that we can kind of do in order to make that thing, which would otherwise be a kind of thought or notion in the back of your head, in order to make it real, even if it's just getting you the first couple of steps in the direction of whatever that ambition was. So, the site is relatively simple in terms of its navigation, I'm showing you the desktop version here. As I say thousands and thousands of users on the site and therefore thousands and thousands of wishes on there. You go on, you make a wish or you see the existing wishes which are there. And they're not, as I say wistful kind of Disney style things, they're real things that we can do something about, however small that thing may be. They're all on there and, as I say, you either join one or start a new one of your own. But critically, as I say, the actual point of difference, is that we do something about it. And it may be that we do a slightly tongue in cheek thing, it may be that we do a really serious thing, it may be that we link up with a brand, it may be expert opinion that we solicit..but every 24 hours something is happening.

So there is a thing here, 'I wish the Nigerian government would do more about the missing school girls, you know the ones that were kidnapped by the Islamic fundamentalists...what we did then was a kind of dawn raid on the Nigerian Embassy in London, where we wrote the name of each of the individual missing girls, who'd been kidnapped and taken to this forest in northern Nigeria. Put it on a post it note and, as a kind of statement, left those post-it notes on the door of the Embassy round about six am before anyone woke up.

This was someone wanting a half decent boyfriend, as she put it. So we put this sign, a missing sign, on a lamp post in, er...we just put one of these, right, and this went all over Twitter. We had a huge amount of interest in it. By kind of formatting the wish as something which, as I say, was real, which existed, rather than just a tweet or a thought, it was something real and tangible in the world. And we put together, probably, I would say 16 or 17 couples because they either said, 'Oh my God, if you find this guy, I would definitely want to know about it.' Or they were saying, 'I am that guy, who is this demanding girl and where can I meet her?' So that worked incredibly well for us. And, as I say, we make no judgement about the wishes, all we do is do something real and meaningful about them every single day. Thank you very much for listening.

## Key and Notes

### 3a VOCABULARY

- A Becoming more and more successful – going from strength to strength  
 B When you cannot believe something is as good as it seems- too good to be true  
 C Very effective and successful- like magic  
 D The belief that something you want to happen will happen, even though this is not actually likely.- wishful thinking  
 E A wish or hope becoming reality.-dream come true  
 F Beginning to make a positive change.- a step in the right direction

### 4 VIDEO

- 3 The belief that the more people work together, the more likely they are to get what they want  
 2 The idea that if you want something, so will someone else.  
 5 An example of how CrowdWish responded to a serious wish.  
 4 The importance of doing something real and practical about the wishes.  
 1 The idea that everyone, rich or poor, has dreams, wishes, hopes and desires.  
 6 An example of how CrowdWish responded to a funny or 'tongue in cheek' wish.

### 5 GRAMMAR

- 1 I want you to stop being late. I wish you would stop being late/I wish you would be on time.  
 2 I don't have any money. I wish I had some money.  
 3 I've lost my wallet. I wish I hadn't lost my wallet/had been more careful  
 4 He isn't in my class. I wish he were in my class (was is also acceptable in less formal contexts)  
 5 Please sit down. I wish you would sit down  
 6 I broke my leg skiing. I wish I hadn't broken my leg/I hadn't gone skiing.

Note that students often find the use of 'would' difficult and are likely to produce sentences such 'I wish you sat down' but this would mean the person never sits or can't sit, whereas 'I wish you would sit down' is a request for the person to change their behaviour on this occasion.



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