



THE UNIVERSITY
OF QUEENSLAND
AUSTRALIA

CREATE CHANGE

The Three S's of Resilience

Staying well through your medical studies and beyond

Presented to the UQ Medical Students for Research Week

By Dr Bronwyn Robson – Student Services Counsellor b.robson@uq.edu.au



Self Care



Self
Compassion



Stress
Management



You work so hard...



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fk9uf7A8clk>

Potential Study Hazards



Anxiety

Depression

Strain on personal relationships

Sense of isolation

Imposter syndrome

Perfectionism

Uncertainty about the future

Lack of balance

Burnout and Stress!

Burnout

- Burnout is:
 - A state of complete mental, physical and emotional exhaustion.
 - Not just about long hours.
 - About a sense of not being in control of how a job is being carried out.
 - Working towards a goal that doesn't resonate, lack of purpose
 - Lacking support
 - Too much stress that is not managed in the short term can lead to burn out.
- Counter burnout with resilience.

8 SIGNS YOU'RE BURNED OUT

You're Not Taking Care Of Your
Basic Needs

You're Snoozing Your Alarm
Too Much

Your To-Do List Is Overwhelming

Your Life Doesn't Motivate You

You're Not Having A Break

You're Getting Overly Irritated By
Other People

You're Living On Auto Pilot

Your Thoughts Are Negative

What is Resilience?

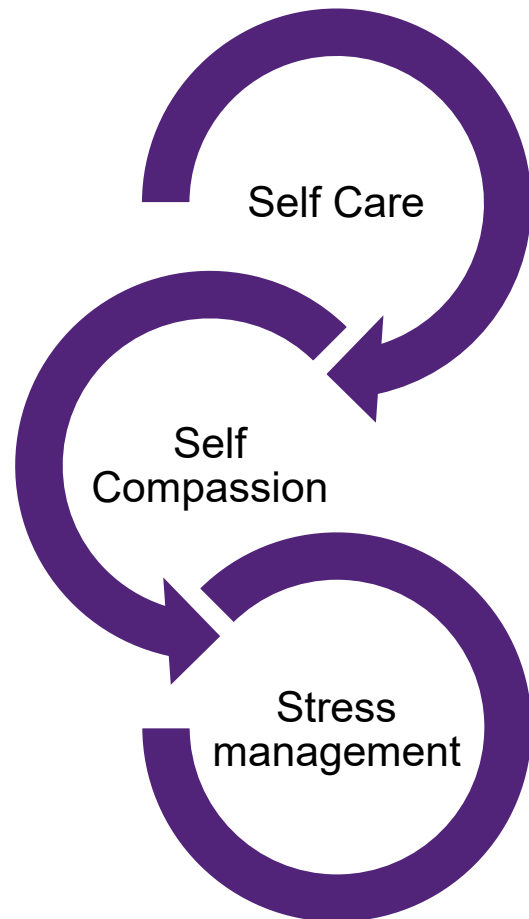
“Resilience is that ineffable quality that allows some people to be knocked down by life and come back stronger than ever. Rather than letting failure overcome them and drain their resolve, they find a way to rise from the ashes.”

In the words of Chumbawamba:

I get knocked down, but I get up again
You are never gonna keep me down
I get knocked down, but I get up again
You are never gonna keep me down
I get knocked down, but I get up again
You are never gonna keep me down
I get knocked down, but I get up again
You are never gonna keep me down



What are the elements of resilience? The three S's.



- care provided for you, by you. It is taking the time to do some of the activities that nurture you, to take proper *care* of yourself.
- extending compassion (kindness) to one's self in instances of perceived inadequacy, failure or general suffering/emotional hurt.
- a wide spectrum of techniques aimed at controlling a person's level of stress, especially chronic stress, usually for the purpose of improving everyday functioning.



What is Self-Care and why is it important?

Self-care is:

- Wikipedia - self care is any necessary human regulatory function which is under individual control, deliberate and self-initiated
- any activity that you do voluntarily which helps you maintain your **physical, mental or emotional health**.
- Looking after yourself

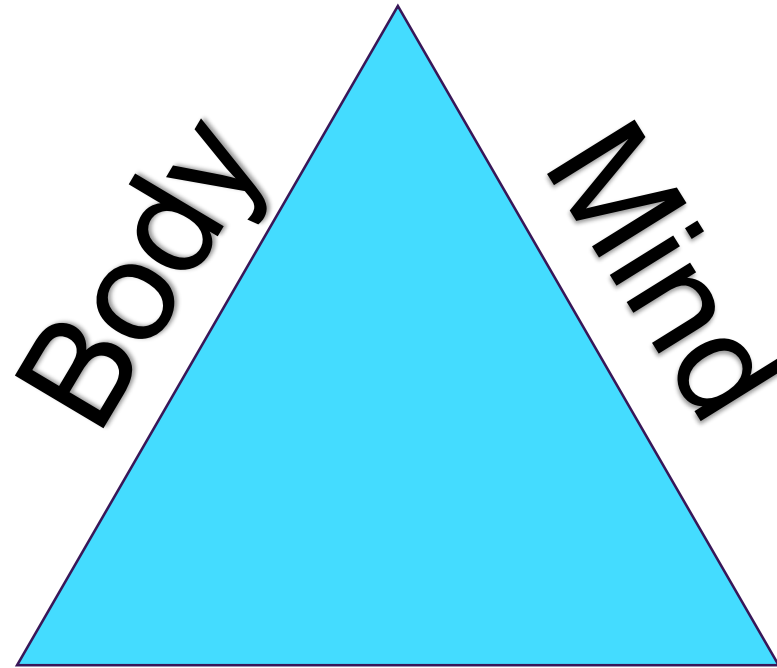
Self-care:

- keeps you healthy – physically and mentally
- helps you relax, recharge and get ready to take on responsibilities
- helps you to manage pre-existing conditions



Self-Care Examples

Three deep breaths
Get down and boogie
Be still
Inhale an upbeat smell
Have a good laugh

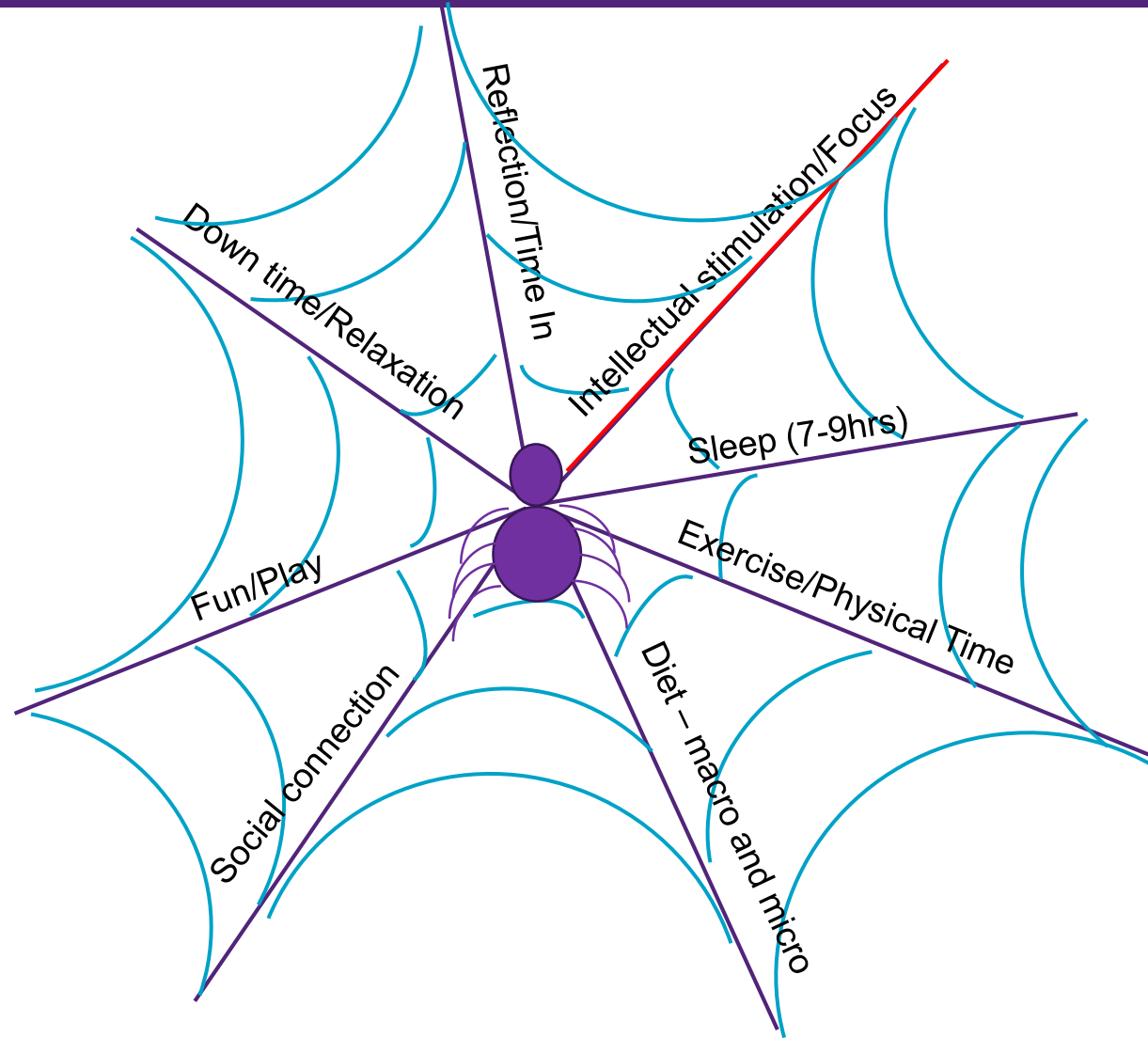


Soul

Help someone
Beauty Scavenger Hunt
Write out your thoughts
Stroke a pet
Ask for help

Compliments List
Cloud watching
Goof around
Mini declutter
Unplug
Mini meditation

All About Balance



Based on the Healthy Mind Platter by Dr David Rock and Dr Dan Siegel - <http://www.mindplatter.com/>

Sleep

Essential to humans – psychologically and physically restorative.

REM sleep – memory and concentration

Important for general health, repair, growth, mood and performance

Lack of Sleep

- Poor attention, concentration and memory
- Irritability and other mood disturbances
- Poor physical coordination

Good sleep and good sleepers

- Less than 30 minutes to fall asleep
- Wake only once or twice
- A night of difficulty is normal, insomnia for more than 1 month is not.

Importance of sleep hygiene

Tips for maintaining balance

- Have rules and stick to them
- Set plans and have goals for every day
- Focus on what matters
- Say NO to unhealthy academic culture expectations
- Use support networks
- Learn how to say “no”.
- Make use of the flexibility
- Cut off intrusive technology
- Be yourself
- Take care of yourself and stay healthy

BALANCE

A Dizzying Journey Through the Science
of Our Most Delicate Sense



Carol Svec

If you're feeling awful and that you're not ok, CHECK

- Are you hydrated?
- Have you eaten in the last 3 hours?
- Have you showered in the last 24 hours?
- Have you stretched your legs in the last 24 hours?
- Have you said something nice to someone in the last day?
- Have you moved your body to music in the last day?
- Have you cuddled a living being in the last 2 days?
- Have you changed medications recently?
- If it's daytime, are you dressed?
- If it's night time are you sleepy and fatigued but resisting going to sleep?
- Have you over exerted yourself lately – physically, mentally, emotionally or socially?

Have you waited a week?

Self-Compassion

We are familiar with the concept of compassion...

Elements of compassion:

- Noticing suffering
- Feeling moved by suffering so your heart reacts to the pain
- A desire to help, care for, understand or exhibiting kindness
- Realization that suffering, failure and imperfection are part of the human experience.

But what is self-compassion?

Self-Compassion

- Self-kindness
- Common humanity
- Mindfulness



*Instead of mercilessly judging and **criticizing yourself** for various inadequacies or shortcomings, self-compassion means you are kind and understanding when confronted with personal failings – after all, who ever said you were supposed to be perfect?*

A Word on the Inner Critic



An inner voice that judges, criticizes, or demeans a person whether or not the self-criticism is objectively justified.

Comes from internalized early life experiences.

Can affect every aspect of our lives.

Affects us by undermining our positive feelings about ourselves and others.

Common examples – “You’re stupid”, “you’ll never be successful”, “you can’t handle this”

Not the same thing as a conscience.

The inner critic strives for perfection = **ANXIETY**

Self-compassion allows us to quiet the inner critic = **Emotional Resilience**

Be More Self-Compassionate Through

Recognising our common humanity

- Failure and suffering are part of the human experience
- Allow us to experience the range of human emotions
- Suffering and happiness are linked

Having Self-Kindness

- Understanding our failures and personality characteristics that cause us pain
- Actively comforting ourselves when we feel pain/disappointment
- Allowing ourselves to feel the emotions and look after ourselves
- Giving ourselves a hug

Being Mindful

- Having balanced awareness
- Mentally taking note of thoughts and feelings without making judgements about them
- Not ignoring
- Not getting fused
- Keeps you connected to the present moment

Self-Compassion Break

Say to yourself:

1. This is a moment of suffering

That's mindfulness. Other options include:

This hurts.

Ouch.

This is stress.

2. Suffering is a part of life

That's common humanity. Other options include:

Other people feel this way.

I'm not alone.

We all struggle in our lives.

Now, put your hands over your heart, feel the warmth of your hands and the gentle touch of your hands on your chest. Say to yourself:

3. May I be kind to myself

You can also ask yourself, "What do I need to hear right now to express kindness to myself?" Is there a phrase that speaks to you in your particular situation, such as:

May I give myself the compassion that I need

May I learn to accept myself as I am

May I forgive myself

May I be strong.

May I be patient

Is the academic life stressful?

YES!

A 2015 survey of doctoral students at the University of Arizona in Tucson found that around three-quarters were under 'more than average' stress.

Approximately one-third of Ph.D. students are at risk of having or developing a common psychiatric disorder like depression (Levecque, K et al, 2017).

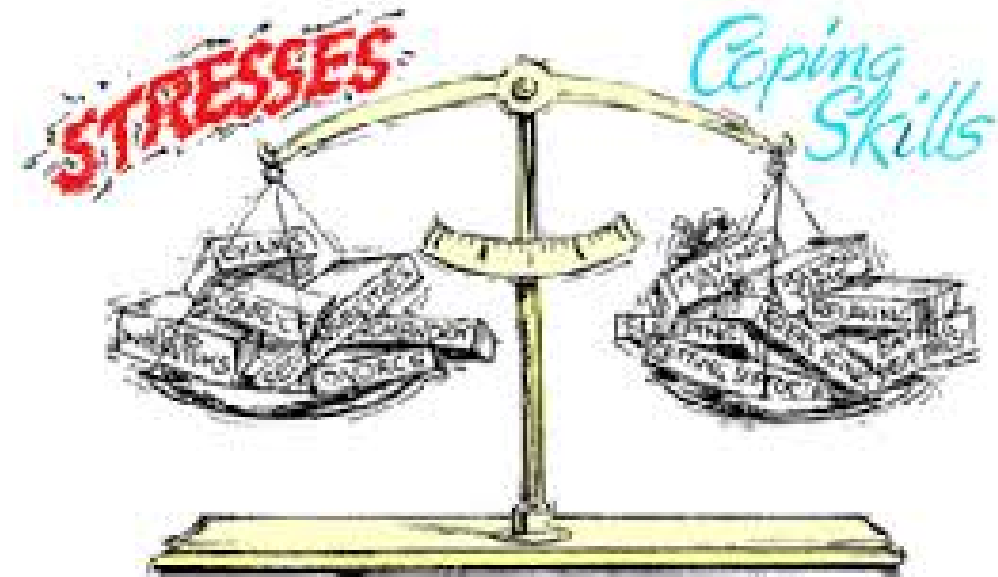
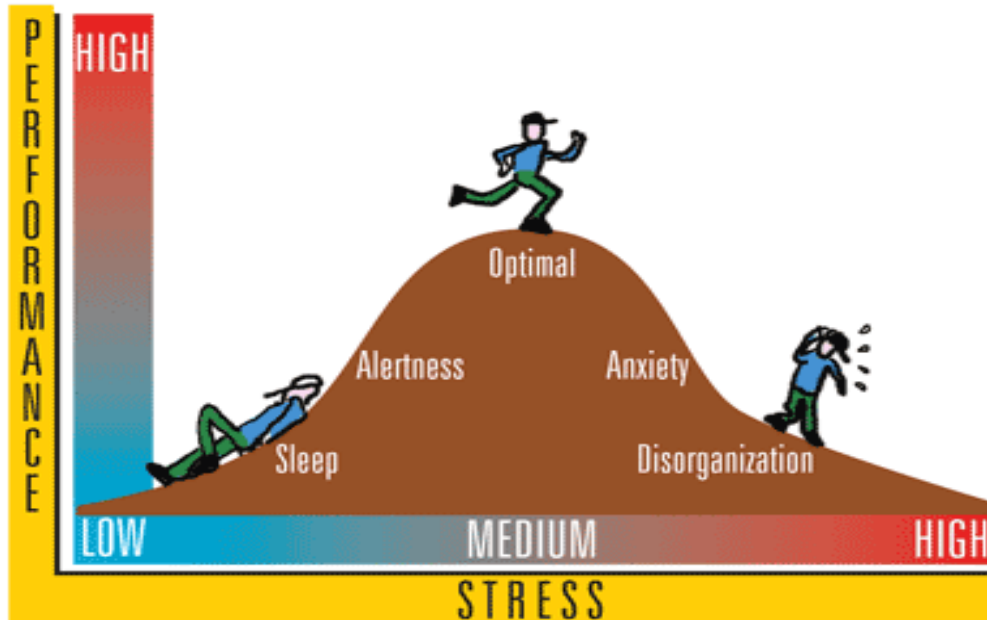
Not every day can be in balance, but your life has to be in balance.

STRESS!

Stress is the body's response to something that demands adaptation.

A degree of stress is necessary for growth; stress is not inherently bad for you.

Stress Performance Connection



Please note: this scale is not a clinical diagnostic instrument and is provided for educational purposes. It merely identifies some of the more common symptoms of stress.
If you have any concerns about your state of emotional health, you should consult with a mental health professional.

INSTRUCTIONS: In the last month, how often has the following been true for you?

Write the number that fits your reality on the line before each question.

0 | Never 1 | Seldom 2 | Sometimes 3 | Often 4 | Always

- | | |
|--|--|
| ___ 1. I feel tired. | ___ 14. I use caffeine or nicotine more than usual. |
| ___ 2. I find it very hard to relax or “wind-down.” | ___ 15. I feel overwhelmed and helpless. |
| ___ 3. I find it hard to make decisions. | ___ 16. I have nervous habits (e.g., biting my nails, grinding my teeth, fidgeting, pacing, etc). |
| ___ 4. My heart races and I find myself breathing rapidly. | ___ 17. I forget little things (e.g. where I put my keys, people’s names, details discussed during the last work meeting). |
| ___ 5. I have trouble thinking clearly. | ___ 18. I have stomach upsets (e.g., nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, constipation, gas). |
| ___ 6. I eat too much or too little. | ___ 19. I am irritable and easily annoyed. |
| ___ 7. I get headaches. | ___ 20. I have mood-swings and feel over-emotional. |
| ___ 8. I feel emotionally numb. | ___ 21. I find it hard to concentrate. |
| ___ 9. I think about my problems over and over again during the day. | ___ 22. I have trouble feeling that life is meaningful. |
| ___ 10. I have sleeping problems (e.g., trouble falling asleep, trouble staying asleep, trouble waking up, nightmares, etc). | ___ 23. I am withdrawn and feel distant and cut off from other people. |
| ___ 11. I have trouble feeling hopeful. | ___ 24. I use alcohol and/or other drugs to try and help cope. |
| ___ 12. I find myself taking unnecessary risks or engaging in behavior hazardous to health and/or safety. | ___ 25. My work performance has declined and I have trouble completing things. |
| ___ 13. I have back and neck pain, or other chronic tension-linked pain | |

TOTAL SCORE: _____

Are You Stressed?

Your Perception of Stress

– c/o TED talk “How to Make Stress Your Friend” by Kelly McGonigal

A study tracked 30,000 adults in the United States for eight years.

- Started by asking people, "How much stress have you experienced in the last year?"
- Also asked, "Do you believe that stress is harmful for your health?"
- Used public death records to find out who died.
- The bad news
 - A lot of stress in the previous year = 43% increased risk of dying.
 - But! *Only true for the people who also believed that stress is harmful for your health.*
- The good news
 - A lot of stress *but* did not view stress as harmful were no more likely to die.
 - In fact = lowest risk of dying of anyone in the study, including people who had relatively little stress.

Rethinking your stress response as helpful:

- Pounding heart = prepared for action
- Breathing fast = more oxygen to the brain
- Physiological response = blood vessels staying relaxed (rather than constricting)
- Stress = social – why? Oxytocin release encourages you to seek out support
- Stress as helpful = beneficial to performance, less anxiety, more confidence

For every major stressful life experience, that increased the risk of dying by 30 percent. But that wasn't true for everyone. People who spent time caring for others showed absolutely no stress-related increase in dying. Zero. Caring created resilience.

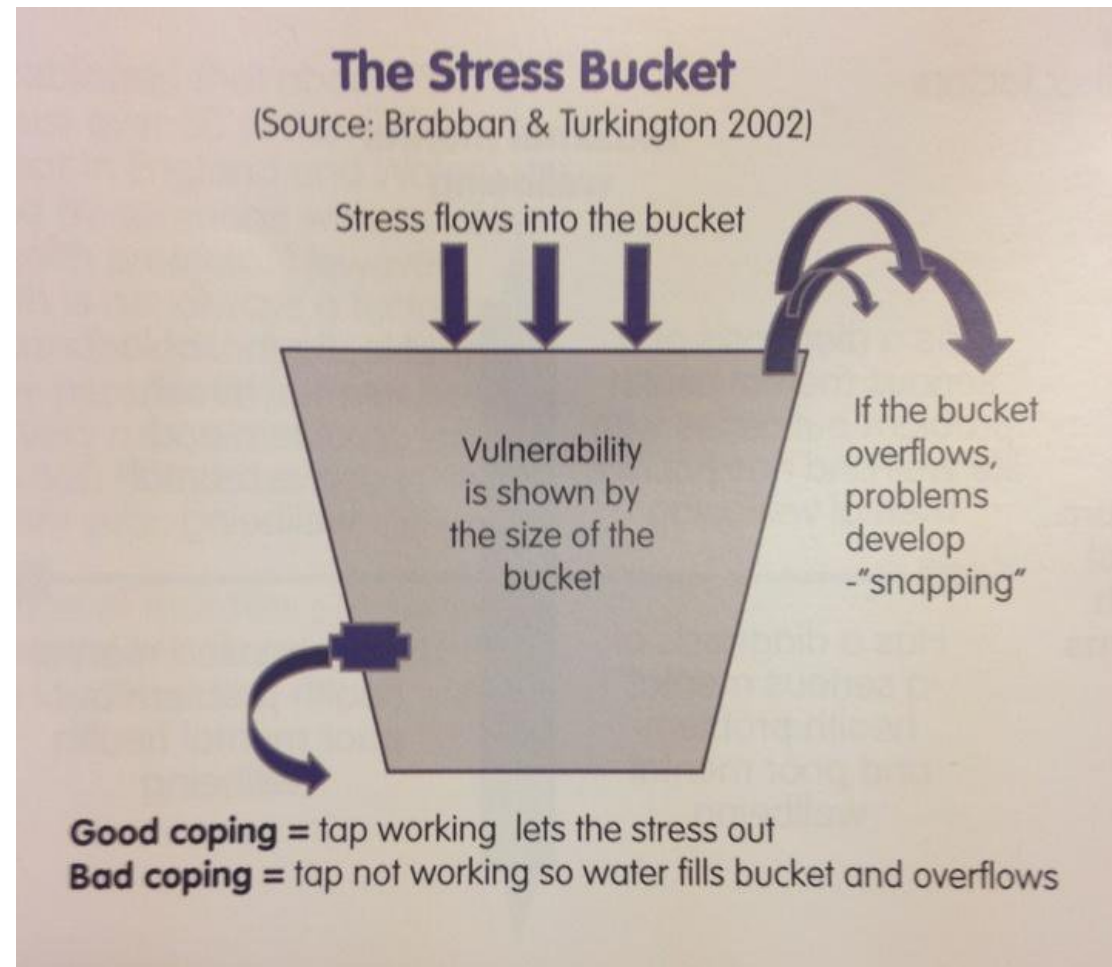
Quote from Kelly McGonigal

“When you choose to view your stress response as helpful, you create the biology of courage. And when you choose to connect with others under stress, you can create resilience... Stress gives us access to our hearts. The compassionate heart that finds joy and meaning in connecting with others, and yes, your pounding physical heart, working so hard to give you strength and energy. And when you choose to view stress in this way, you're not just getting better at stress, you're actually making a pretty profound statement. You're saying that you can trust yourself to handle life's challenges. And you're remembering that you don't have to face them alone. ”

Find the TED Talk at

https://www.ted.com/talks/kelly_mcgonigal_how_to_make_stress_your_friend/transcript?language=en#t-776526

Stress Bucket



Stress, Perception and Mindfulness

- Perception plays a major role in resilience.
- Resilience won't make your problems go away — but resilience can give you the ability to see past them, find enjoyment in life and better handle stress. If you aren't as resilient as you'd like to be, you can develop skills to become more resilient.
- A study linking mindfulness and resilience found that, “Mindful people...can better cope with difficult thoughts and emotions without becoming overwhelmed or shutting down. Pausing and observing the mind may help us resist getting stuck in our story and as a result empower us to move forward.”
- Mindful Resilience – changing perception
 - Pause
 - Take the time for the mind to be consciously aware of the body.
 - Engage the observing mind rather than thinking mind.
 - The thinking mind can now respond rather than react.



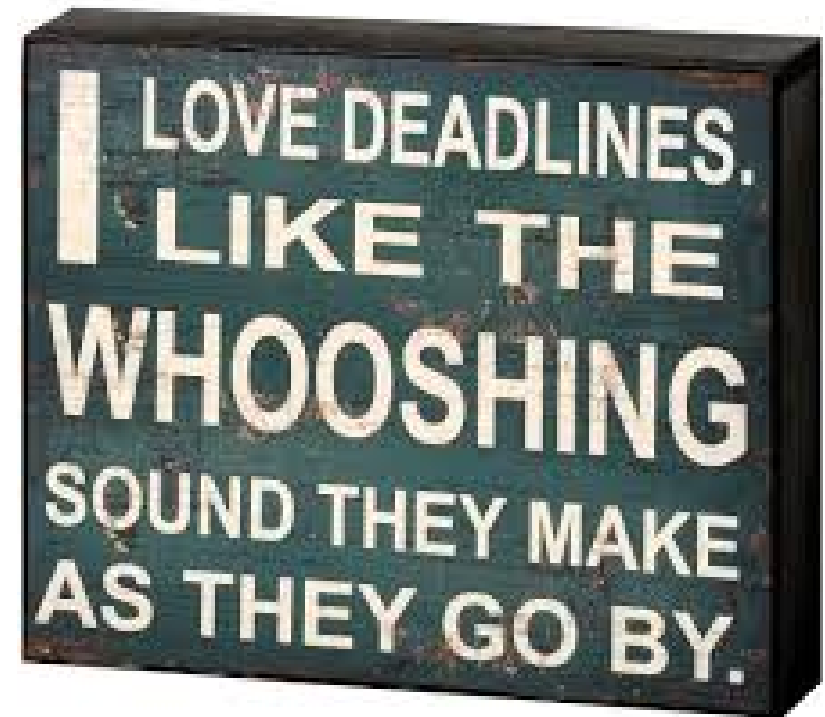
Feeding stress, worry and rumination



https://www.youtube.com/watch?list=PL2BBCB824B7CF7904&time_continue=4&v=vzKryaN44ss

Stress Management

- Breathe – controlled breathing causes physiological changes that help
- Work smarter, not harder
- Take time to step back and relax
- Plan and be disciplined, but let go of perfectionism
- Redefine stress inducing words like “DEADLINE” eg submission date
- Label negative feelings
- Stay connected/meet new people
- Make decisions – solves problems AND reduces anxiety and worry
- Be grateful
- Physical contact – hugs help!
- Live in the present and live to your values.
- Separate happiness from achievements and let go of unrealistic expectations.



Can you have it all?

- If you love what you do, then your work is a big part of your life, and that's ok. Passion is important for academic success.
- Work and life are not opposites – rather, a distinction between personal and professional arenas.
- Many doctors tend to be diligent, high achievers. Combined with the pressures in the field, this can be a recipe for an unbalanced life.
- If self-worth and life satisfaction are tied to one single thing (ie career) then this can be detrimental to your personal well-being and to your relationships with others.
- Dedicated time for non-work activities can be beneficial to work productivity because they allow you to:
 - Gain a fresh perspective
 - Find new inspiration
 - Move past the frustrations that accompany your work
 - Refresh and recharge, so that you can work more effectively and more efficiently

Supports at UQ

- Health Supports
 - UQ Health Care
 - Student Run Clinics eg UQ Psychology Clinic
- SAS
 - Education and Equity, including grievances and discrimination issues
 - Employment
 - Legal
 - Migration
 - Welfare
 - Gender and sexuality
- UQ Ally
- Graduate School
 - Admissions and management of candidature
 - Research Training and mentoring
 - Career development
 - Online and workshops
- Student Services



Student Services

What we do:

- Free and confidential counselling
- Face-to-Face, telephone, Skype and emergency appointments
- Groups – Mindfulness Yoga, Freedom From Your Cage (Body Image), Art-based Therapy, Pet Therapy
- Disability (Physical/Mental Health, permanent and/or temporary), Learning Support, Accommodation and International Student Advisors
- Other workshops: Accommodation, International, Learning, New2UQ, Research and Student Life

How to find/contact us at St Lucia:

Building 21D

Tel: 3365-1704

Email: student.services@uq.edu.au

Student Services Website - find out more

<http://www.uq.edu.au/student-services>

Student Hub <https://studenthub.uq.edu.au/> (for DIY online bookings)

Workshop calendar <http://www.uq.edu.au/student-services/workshops>



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Questions??

