This may come as a surprise, but most of you out there are awesome! The trouble is, university isn’t always the best environment for staying awesome. There’s stress, there are distractions, there’s procrastination, there are break-ups. In fact, a lot of the work we do here at Counselling and Psychological Services (CAPS) is helping out when the stress of university gets in the way of being awesome. It was with this in mind that we decided to create CAPStivate.

CAPStivate is a quarterly digital magazine written by the staff of CAPS and dedicated to providing stories, advice and inspiration about how you can make the most out of university life. In our first edition, we’re going to talk about building connections. In particular, we talk to some of the people involved in the Sidekicks peer advocacy program to see what it takes to help friends in crisis. And for a bit of fun, enter the photo competition on page 7 so you can show the world your snapshot skills.

So jump in, have a read, be CAPStivated, and above all: just keep being awesome!

Dr Clinton Moore
Clinical Psychologist
Counselling and Psychological Services (CAPS)
The most interesting thing I have done in my life is … flying to 11,000 feet in a hang glider.

The thing that I am most proud of is … well, two things: starting and running Food Connect Sydney and starting a family – both in 2010. In 2010, Food Connect Sydney won Social Entrepreneur of the Year and made the Sydney Morning Herald’s 100 Most Influential list. In 2012, Food Connect won Best Food Company in Green Lifestyle magazine’s inaugural Green Lifestyle Awards recognising eco-leaders.

People might be interested to know that … if a person spends $1 at a supermarket, farmers can receive as little as five cents in the dollar. Through Food Connect Sydney, close to half of the money goes to the farmers. An independent report has found that Food Connect Sydney has made it more viable for farmers, which is ‘mission accomplished’ for Food Connect Sydney, particularly given that the average age of farmers is getting close to retirement. Food Connect Sydney sources 80 percent of its produce from right within the Sydney basin – so when we talk about local food, that’s what we mean.

What I’ve learnt over the years is … that there are so many exciting, inspiring jobs and enterprises out there that you don’t have to be stuck in a boring job – and if you can’t find one, start one yourself! Social enterprise is such an exciting area to work in, because it combines the passion and motivation of the not-for-profit world with the flexibility and need to be focused and hard-nosed of the business world – and we do good at the same time.

I’m a big fan of … young coconuts and figs.

I’m inspired by … the sheer number of people getting involved in the fair food movement, especially young people – specifically the Australian Youth Food Movement – because it shows there is a bright future for this work. I’m also inspired by farmers’ dedication to doing the right thing in a very difficult and unfair market place and producing amazing food right on our doorstep.

My favourite quote is … “no matter who you vote for, the government always gets in”. It seems to me that so many people are waiting for somebody else and/or the government to change things for the better. What I think is so exciting for social enterprise is that it gives consumers a chance to vote with their wallet. With every meal we each vote for the world that we want. If we buy our food from organisations that pay farmers too little for food that is farmed from miles away, they’re the values we support. Buy from organisations that meet your values and don’t buy from organisations that don’t. There are so many social enterprises – Food Connect Sydney is just one of many (see Social Enterprise Finder: my.socialentreprisefinder.com.au and the School for Social Entrepreneurs www.the-sse.org/schools/24/australia).
You’re up late finishing a report that’s due tomorrow but, as usual, you flick over to the Facebook tab you’ve kept open. A message pops up in the chat window from a friend: “Hey, you free to chat? I’m really down at the moment.” Do you:

a. immediately ring them and allow them to talk your ear off
b. ignore the message and get on with your own growing pile of uni stuff
c. start a chat, but try to keep the topic off feelings
d. start a chat, and try to act as a their therapist
e. recommend that they go and talk to a professional if there’s something wrong.

The scary thing is there is no ‘correct’ answer here. Each option has its pros and cons, but knowing how to wade through these can be difficult. The Sidekicks program was developed by Counselling and Psychological Services for just this reason: to teach people the skills to help their friends when life gets stressful.

The program has its foundations in student network and community building. In fact, the choice of ‘Sidekicks’ was intended to conjure images of those superheroes who grace the silver screen and are committed to looking after the citizens of their fair city. Sidekicks founder Patrick Sheehan says: “It’s encouraging to see there’s a community of students out there who really are concerned about how their friends are going and are really adept at responding to them, no matter what their background is.” To further this goal, the program teaches students skills in empathy, ways of responding to crises and making referrals to professionals. Graduates of the program then have the option of going on to help run community development activities around campus (which kicked off this year in Semester One).

While the course may seem very focused on ‘others’, facilitator Liz Stanton is quick to point out that the benefits of the program extend beyond just helping friends.

“People who take part in the program have an opportunity to learn valuable skills they can use, not just with their peers and friends, but also in their own personal relationships and in their future work environments,” she says.

This is a sentiment mirrored by a recent graduate, Emily Coucher, who emphasises that, while the training is useful for her Psychology degree, “it’s good for everyone because there are next to no jobs where you won’t use basic communication skills or form interpersonal connections”.

Let’s go back to our multiple-choice test again. If you still haven’t made up your mind on the best course of action to take in this scenario, you’re not alone. Our instinct is normally to try to fix these types of situations, but “one friend in particular told me she really appreciated me simply letting her express herself, as I attempted to understand more about how she felt about her situation”, Emily says. “I understand now that anyone can Google an answer to certain problems, but being able to share your feelings with someone and have them understand is what people are looking for.”

Sidekicks training runs every semester. The next Sidekicks course will start in early Semester 2.

Check out sydney.edu.au/sidekicks for more information.
Q: What is the best way to meet new people in Sydney? I'm new here and feeling a bit lonely.

A: Sydney can be a tough place to meet people, but there are a few things you can do to break through:

1. Volunteering: there are plenty of opportunities to volunteer around Sydney. Choosing something you care about will help you to meet like-minded people.

2. Join a club: this can be a sport or a hobby. Just be sure it’s something you are interested in, which is more likely to attract like-minded people.

3. Sign up for a class: ever wanted to learn how to change a car tyre? Or learn how to tango? Now’s the time.

4. Join a study group: you’re all in that tutorial room studying the same thing, so be brave and ask if people want to work on it together.

Also keep in mind that your lifestyle can have a big impact on your social network. For example, if you live by yourself or spend most of your time studying alone, it will be harder to meet others. Options such as share-houses may provide you with more company.

The most important thing is to be brave and put yourself out there! While it can be scary, it’s often true that you have to invite people out to be invited out. Above all, accept invitations – go out, and don’t be a wallflower. Good luck and have some fun with it!

Q: Sometimes I have days when I feel really sad and low. Is this normal, or something that I should get help with?

A: Sorry to hear you’re feeling this way. The first thing to say is that you’re not alone. In fact more than one million Australian adults experience a significant low mood every year. But is it normal? Well, normal is a funny word isn’t it? At CAPS, we actually don’t believe in using it when it comes to feelings, because there really isn’t any abnormal way to feel. All feelings are great, provided we experience them at the appropriate times and in moderation. Feeling low makes perfect sense if something bad has happened to us, but if we’re still feeling that way even when things are going right, then it may be worth looking into.

To help, we need to consider how often you’re feeling this way and whether these feelings are stopping you from doing the stuff you usually do, such as going to work, class or seeing your friends. It’s normal for us all to have days where we don’t feel great, but these days shouldn’t be the norm. It might be helpful to come and speak about how you’re feeling with one of the counsellors at CAPS. You can call us (8627 8433) or pop in to arrange an appointment. Also, think about talking with your family or close friends about it. Just remember that keeping things inside will only make you feel worse. Hope you feel better soon.

Q: I’ve never been a morning person, but lately I’m finding it even more difficult to get out of bed. I keep making mistakes at work and can’t concentrate in class. How can I get into a better sleep pattern?

A: We’re right there with you, particularly when you’re getting up to a day of uni as opposed to a day of holidays. However, there are a number of things that can influence our tiredness and concentration that you could look at:

1. It may be worth taking a trip to your local GP for a check-up just to make sure everything’s fine physically.

2. Consider how you’ve been feeling lately. Low mood can have a big effect on both sleep and concentration.

3. Drugs such as alcohol, pot and stimulants can have negative effects on sleeping and concentration.

For today though, let’s work under the assumption that we just need to improve your sleep patterns. Here are some basic things we suggest you consider:

- Go to sleep at a suitable time each night. Aim for eight hours sleep.
- Set as many alarms as you need to wake up the next morning.
- Avoid taking naps during the day. It will make it harder for you to sleep at a decent time at night if you have slept for three hours in the afternoon.
- Try to maintain a reasonably healthy diet and have regular exercise.
- For more tips check out the CAPS Sleep e-Book.
Take a moment to look at your music collection and find an album that doesn’t have a song about break-ups. You’ll probably be searching for a while. Obviously there’s a reason for this; at some point in our lives, most of us are going to find ourselves on either the giving or receiving end of a break-up. It’s never going to be easy, but let’s look at some ways that we can deal with relationship break-ups.

**BREAK-UP DOs**
- Tell your partner sooner rather than later.
- Be direct, honest and stick to the facts, but try to show empathy.
- Try to avoid arguments about why you’re breaking up.
- Give your partner some room to vent, but don’t escalate.
- Talk to your family and friends about what you’re experiencing.
- Stay physically active and socially engaged after the break-up.
- Try to keep a balanced routine around sleep and diet.
- Take your time before launching into a new relationship. It takes time to re-establish your “self” after being part of a couple for a while.

**BREAK-UP DON’Ts**
- Don’t break up over social media, even if it does seem easier in the short term.
- Don’t use cliché break-up lines such as “it’s not you, it’s me”.
- Don’t use an automated break-up call service.
- Don’t try to get ‘payback’ or ‘revenge’.
- Don’t contact your ex every time you think about them.
- Don’t start contacting all your previous exes. They’re exes for a reason.
- Don’t continually update Facebook with your emotional and angry updates against your ex.
- Don’t binge drink or eat. Try and maintain a healthy, balanced diet.
- Don’t behave spitefully toward your ex if they find a new partner.

**COMMON EMOTIONS FOLLOWING A BREAK-UP**
OK, you now have a whole bunch of hints to help make life easier, but let’s look at the emotions you can realistically expect to go through after a break-up.
- Denial: Refusing to accept the relationship is over is common. Look out for thoughts like “they just need space for a few days”.
- Bargaining: Who doesn’t like a bargain? Look out for thoughts like “I can change, I promise” and “it will never happen again.”
- Anger: Annoyed? Angry? Of course you are! Look out for thoughts like “after all I’ve done for you how dare you dump me!” or “How could I have been so stupid?”
- Guilt: You may feel guilty if you initiated the break-up or if your actions were the cause of the break-up.
- Sadness: It’s common to feel sad during a break-up and to feel a sense of despair. Common thoughts may include; “I will never meet anyone again”, “There’s something wrong with me” and “I will never get over this.”

Give yourself some time to get through any of these reactions that might arise. There’s really no right or wrong emotional reaction. You just need to make sure you aren’t getting stuck as a result.

**WHEN TO SEEK PROFESSIONAL HELP?**
If you feel you can’t move on and your mood is preventing you from doing many of your normal activities, you may benefit from talking to a professional. Contact the reception desk at CAPS to book an appointment with a psychologist or alternatively consult your GP.

**Camperdown/Darlington Campus**
T 02 8627 8433 or 8627 8437
E caps.admin@sydney.edu.au

**Cumberland Campus**
T 02 9351 9638
E cumberland.cs@sydney.edu.au

Welcome to Take the challenge! In each edition of CAPStivate we’ll present you with a small challenge to help you get ahead at uni this year.

Seeing as we’re all back for a new year at uni, our first challenge is going to be expanding your social network. The campus is a big place, teeming with people you don’t know, so it’s easy to feel lost and isolated. Whatever your situation, improving your social connections is important. Studies show that social support helps reduce low mood, anxiety and stress, and enhances health and longevity – and that’s not all. A strong sense of belonging is also one of the most important factors predicting student success at uni, so let’s get connected.

**CHALLENGE**

*Introduce yourself to one new person every week for the next month (or longer if you wish).*

**TIPS FOR SUCCESS**

If the thought of this is making you nervous, you’re not alone. Here’s the thing: the first time you take this challenge it may seem worrying, but the more you do it, the easier it will get. Here are some hints to help:

– Remember other students may be just as nervous about not knowing many people on campus and they will be glad that you made the first step.
– Don’t start big. Aim for a two-minute introduction to start with.
– Ask open-ended questions. Begin with words such as ‘how’, ‘what’, ‘where’, ‘when’ or ‘why’.
– Try not to read minds. You’ll never know what another person is thinking until they tell you.
– Don’t give up. Just because a conversation doesn’t spark with one person, doesn’t mean you’re destined for failure with the next.

Good luck!
Any balanced study timetable should include some recharge time. To get those cogs turning, we’ve included some ideas for cheap, fun (and, of course, wholesome) adventures around Sydney.

**PICNIC WITH A VIEW ON COCKATOO ISLAND**
Pack a picnic or grab some BBQ supplies and catch the ferry from Circular Quay to Cockatoo Island. From convicts to ship building, the island is alive with history against a background of beautiful harbour views. If a picnic isn’t your thing, you can enjoy pizza and a beer while watching the sun set at the Island Bar. Otherwise, if you’re up for something a bit more involved, book in for a night of camping ($50 per night for a camping site). For more information, see www.cockatooisland.gov.au or www.theislandbar.com.au

**GET ARTY AT THE BIENNALE**
While picnicking on Cockatoo Island you may like to check out the 19th Biennale of Sydney. This free festival of international contemporary visual arts runs from 21 March to 9 June. Other venues include Carriageworks, the Art Gallery of NSW, the Museum of Contemporary Art and Artspace. For more info, see www.biennaleofsydney.com.au

**GET BACK TO NATURE ON A COASTAL TRACK**
Who knew you could feel at one with nature while listening to the sweet sound of an A380 coming in to land at Sydney Airport? That’s the deal with the coastal track in the Royal National Park – so close to Sydney and yet so far. Head off on an adventure close to home along this 26km track, which takes in spectacular cliffs and beautiful beaches. If you’re keen to finish the whole track quickly, you can do it in one day. If a slower pace is more your style, you can complete the walk over a couple of days, camping along the way ($10/night for two people). For more information, see www.nationalparks.nsw.gov.au/Royal-National-Park/the-coast-track/walking

**RELAX INTO THE WEEKEND WITH SUNSET MUSIC GIGS**
Every Friday night from 6 to 9pm until the end of March the Seymour Centre will be hosting the Courtyard Sessions; free sunset performances by local up-and-coming musicians. With a pop-up bar, gourmet BBQ and vintage games these gigs are a fabulous way to kick back and get the weekend started. For more info, see www.seymourcentre.com/events/event/courtyard-sessions-2014

**REWIND TO YOUR CHILDHOOD**
For something a bit different, head to the Nicholson Museum and check out the Lego Acropolis. That’s right, the museum currently has a miniature replica of this ancient wonder on display, complete with quirky modern touches. While you’re there, we recommend taking a look the many antiquities on display. The museum is free and located at the southern entrance to the University Quadrangle. It is open Monday to Friday 10am to 4.30pm and the first Saturday of every month from 12 to 4pm. The Lego Acropolis is on display until the middle of the year when it will be replaced with a Lego Pompeii. Find out more at sydney.edu.au/museums/exhibitions-events/lego-acropolis

**DISCOVER THE UNIVERSE AT THE SYDNEY OBSERVATORY**
The Sydney Observatory is located a stone’s throw from The Rocks in a beautiful old building surrounded by gardens and harbour views. It’s free to enter the observatory and explore the exhibits and costs $8 to join a guided telescope/3D space theatre session. For more information, see www.sydneyobservatory.com.au

**CAPTURE THE MOMENT**
Have you taken a great shot on a recent adventure? Are you travelling to far-off corners of the globe, or have you just found a nearby haven you’d love to share? We want you to send us your best travel photo for our CAPSture the Moment photo competition and go in the draw for a $50 JB Hi-Fi gift voucher.

Email your shots to caps.competitions@sydney.edu.au together with your contact details (full name, phone number and email) before midnight on 28 April 2014.

For terms and conditions please visit sydney.edu.au/current_students/counselling/capstivate/photo-terms-conditions
FUNCTIONAL FITNESS
A REALISTIC PLAN

It’s that time again – lectures have kicked off and assessments are coming. Long commutes are on the cards. If there was ever a time that you were going to throw out that New Year’s resolution to stay fit this year, it’s now. Personal trainer Mitch Moore offers you a realistic plan for keeping fit.

First up, let’s make a deal to be realistic about your time commitments. I’m not going to ask you to hit the gym five times a week. In fact, I’m not even going to mention the gym from now on. What I am going to ask is that you find two half-hour slots each week, at whatever time works for you, to try the exercises below. Then in the next edition of CAPStivate we’re just going to change the exercises up, but keep the same time commitment. Easy, right? Keep this up and here’s what I’ll guarantee: you’ll be more alert, sleep better and, by the end of the first month, you’ll feel more energetic. So let’s get started!

GETTING READY
It’s always a good idea to start any new fitness regime with a check-up at your GP to identify any issues that may impact your ability to do specific exercises.

LET’S GET PHYSICAL

CARDIO (30 MINUTES)
Cardiovascular exercises improve heart function, reduce risk of osteoporosis and diabetes and improve muscle mass. So let’s get into it!

Step 1 – Movement (two minutes): Try flexing, extending and rotating all your major joints one by one.

Step 2 – Increasing your heart rate (three minutes): Build from a walk into a slow controlled jog.

Step 3 – Dynamic movements (three minutes): Slowly start to incorporate movements such as high knees, side steps and short sprints.

Step 4 – Hot laps (12 minutes): Now that we’ve warmed up it’s time to really get that heart pumping. Find a park/oval with a reasonably circular track. Run around the track as many times as you can in four minutes eg 2 or 3 1/2 laps. Remember this number, because after you’ve had a three-minute rest, we’re going to do it again. This time, try to beat the previous number of laps (even if just by 20m).

Step 5 – Cool down (10 minutes): Slow your running speed for five minutes. Then spend another five minutes stretching, focusing on your lower back, calves, quads, hamstrings, groin area and upper body.

BODY WEIGHT CIRCUIT (30-35 MINUTES)
This is the best and quickest way to improve strength, muscle size and cardiovascular health all in one. But be warned: you will sweat! A lot. Remember that all the exercises described here should be performed in a controlled way, at a speed that’s appropriate for you.

Step 1 – Warm up (2 minutes): From a standing position with your arms hanging loosely at your sides, flex, extend, and rotate each of the following joints: ankles, feet and toes, knees, hips, trunk, fingers, wrist, elbows, shoulders, neck (side to side, back and forth) and shoulder blades.

Step 2 – Dynamic movements (four minutes): 10 leg swings (each leg), five side lunges (each leg), 20 seconds fast air punching (five seconds up, five seconds down and five seconds sides). Repeat until the four minutes is up.

Step 3 – Circuit exercises: Below is a very scary table. But take a minute and remind yourself that this is just 15-18 minutes once per week. You can do that, right? Sure you can!

This table below shows you all the exercises in your circuit and also the length of time to do each exercise. The idea is to do all the exercises in a row (that is, a complete circuit) before taking a rest. You’ll notice there’s a bit of variation in time between the weeks. This causes the body to work harder and improves strength. Below you can see a description of each of the exercises along with some pictures.

Step 4 – Cool down (10 minutes): Light jogging for three minutes followed by seven minutes of stretching, focusing on hamstrings, quads, chest, back and arms.

Remember to take it easy at first and, most of all, have fun! After all, we’re more likely to have a second go at something we enjoy. See you next edition.

Body Weight Circuit Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Exercise</th>
<th>WEEK 1</th>
<th>WEEK 2</th>
<th>WEEK 3</th>
<th>WEEK 4</th>
<th>WEEK 5</th>
<th>WEEK 6</th>
<th>WEEK 7</th>
<th>WEEK 8</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Air squats</td>
<td>30 sec</td>
<td>45 sec</td>
<td>60 sec</td>
<td>30 sec</td>
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<td>60 sec</td>
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<td>45 sec</td>
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<tr>
<td>Walking lunges</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bench jumps</td>
<td>30 sec</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tricep dips</td>
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<tr>
<td>Plank</td>
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<td>Burpees</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rest</td>
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<td>2 min</td>
<td>90 sec</td>
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<td>90 sec</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

No. of circuits     | 2      | 2      | 2      | 3      | 3      | 3      | 3      | 3      |

Disclaimer: While the information provided in this article is by a personal trainer, this is not a substitute for a consultation with a health practitioner. Counselling and Psychological Services accepts no responsibility for any injury incurred as a result of attempting these exercises.
Air squats: A great exercise for strengthening your core. Aim to have your feet about hip-width apart and slowly crouch with your back straight until your thighs are parallel to the ground. If you have trouble holding the position, try having a small seat to rest on until you develop the strength to do it by yourself.

Walking lunges: An explosive exercise that targets your glutes, calves, hamstrings and quads. Slowly walk in a straight line. With each step drop your back leg until the knee almost touches the ground while maintaining an upright posture. Keep your front knee above the front foot.

Bench jumps: Find something stable like a step or bench around knee height. Jump with both legs together onto the centre of the surface. Then jump down with both feet together.

Tricep dips: Great for helping you open all those tight jars! Start by finding a sturdy bench at about knee height. Sit on it and place your hands on the edge of the bench about shoulder-width apart. Next, slide off the front of the bench with your legs extended straight out in front (you can bend your knees if this is too hard). Straighten your arms, keeping a little bend in your elbows. Slowly bend your elbows to lower yourself towards the floor, making sure to keep your back close to the bench. Once you’re down, push down against the bench to straighten your elbows and come back up.

Plank: Great for boosting your core (abs). Ensure that your hands are shoulder-width apart and place your body in the ‘up’ position of a push-up while making sure that you’re up on your toes.

Burpee: These are those leapfrog things you may have seen people in bootcamps doing. Don’t worry – you can do it too. Burpees strengthen your legs, bottom and abs.
1. Begin in a standing position.
2. Drop into a squat position with your hands on the ground (count 1).
3. Kick your feet back, while keeping your arms extended (count 2).
4. Immediately return your feet to the squat position (count 3).
5. Stand up from the squat position.
The late Nelson Mandela remains an inspirational symbol of strength and courage for millions of people around the world. Karin Austin retraces his path to activism, imprisonment and freedom in his signature book.

I approached reading the book written by and about the revered Nelson Mandela with trepidation – it looked long and serious, a book I felt had to be read at the right time. I expected that reading it with the respect and complete attention it deserves would take a considerable amount of time. However, I was immediately drawn into its vivid world and was unable to put it down. When I did take a few breaks, I found myself wondering about the ‘real world’, desperately wanting to return to this powerful story, history and change.

The book sees Mandela reflecting on, reminiscing and reliving his life, the story beginning in the South African village of Qunu, now his final resting place. Published in 1995, shortly after Mandela was released from prison, the book traces his childhood, education, early career as a lawyer in Johannesburg and his journey to becoming an activist. His move from the philosophy of peaceful protest to guerilla activism is also traced in a real, honest way.

The Rivonia Trial chapters, in which Mandela recounts narrowly escaping the death penalty and instead being sentenced to life in prison, bristles with the battle of archetypal forces of justice and injustice, truth and betrayal. Mandela recounts his prison years with characteristic understatement and the reader is carried along by the knowledge that he, justice and truth will triumph in the end. To his immense credit, Mandela stays true to his values and faith in the dignity of humanity. The absence of in-depth reflection on the impact of his separation from his family leaves the reader with a sense of the pain and grief of Mandela’s loss.

As an autobiography, the book gives readers an excellent insight into Mandela’s innermost thoughts and reflections. I felt honoured to have access to his incredible and powerful story, which he tells with gentle humility, humour and understated poignancy.

This is a ‘must read’ book and one of the most important stories of our time – certainly one to read right now or add to your list of essential books.
Here are a few exercises to help give your brain a workout, in between your studies. All you need to do is fill every column, row and 3x3 box so they contain every number between 1 and 9.

You can find the solutions on: sydney.edu.au/current_students/counselling/capstivate/sudokus

PUZZLE 1 (HARD)

PUZZLE 2 (MEDIUM)

PUZZLE 1 (HARD)

PUZZLE 1 (HARD)
SUMMER RICE NOODLE SALAD
EASY AFFORDABLE RECIPE

When you are super busy and living on a tight budget, it can be a challenge to eat well. Here’s a simple recipe for a healthy, affordable meal. There’s a minimalist version, plus optional ingredients you can add if you have them on hand, as well as versions to suit both vegetarians and meat eaters.

Serves 4
(It’s a good idea to cook extra when you make this for dinner so you can eat the leftovers for lunch the next day.)
Approximate cost: $11

INGREDIENTS
Salad
200g thin rice noodles (vermicelli)
1 large carrot, peeled and grated
2 Lebanese cucumbers, thinly sliced

Protein
500g chicken thighs
or
500g hard tofu

Dressing
Juice of 1–2 limes, or a lemon
2 tablespoons olive oil/preferred salad oil
Salt and pepper

METHOD
1. Cook the noodles according to the directions on the packet. Rinse them in cold water, drain well, and add to salad bowl with grated carrot and sliced cucumber.
2. Remove excess fat from the chicken thighs, season with salt and pepper and fry in a pan with a small amount of oil until cooked through. Rest the chicken on a plate for a few minutes before cutting into slices and adding to the salad bowl.
   or
Cut the tofu into slices, season with salt and pepper and fry in a pan until lightly browned on both sides. Rest on a plate for a few minutes until cool, before adding to the salad bowl.
3. Mix the dressing – lime/lemon juice, oil, salt and pepper – pour over the salad and toss. Serve and enjoy!

OPTIONAL MENU CHANGES
– chopped fresh mint or coriander
– thinly sliced watermelon
– thinly sliced radish or chopped spring onion
– dressing options: sesame oil, soy sauce, fish sauce, chilli sauce or chopped fresh chilli, finely grated ginger
– faster protein options: barbecue chicken or a can of chickpeas.
FOUR FREE APPS TO INCREASE YOUR WELLBEING

It’s a new uni year, so let’s get you off to a great start with some of the best free wellbeing apps around (and no, Snapchat didn’t make the cut!)

MINDSHIFT
Tired of anxiety and fear impacting your life? Mindshift is a great tool to help you learn how to relax, develop more helpful ways of thinking, and identify active steps that will help you take charge of your anxiety. This app includes strategies to deal with everyday anxiety, as well as specific tools to tackle exam anxiety, perfectionism, social anxiety, performance anxiety, worry, panic, and conflict.

Mindshift includes ‘chill-out tools’ such as guided relaxation exercises, calm breathing and a number of visualisations and mindfulness exercises which are great for reducing stress when assignments start piling up.

GRATITUDE JOURNAL 365
What are you thankful for today? No, we’re not bringing Thanksgiving to Oz. We’re talking about gratitude. Studies have shown that the simple exercise of writing down three things you are grateful for over the course of each day can lead to increases in wellbeing, happiness and optimism. This app allows you to keep a gratitude journal to increase your sense of appreciation of what you have in life. It also encourages you to photograph things you’ve been grateful for on any particular day. Try it out for a month and see if you notice a change in your attitude towards life.

CBT-I COACH
Most of us would probably agree that war veterans know a thing or two about holding it together when life gets stressful. The US Department of Veterans Affairs developed the app, CBT-I Coach, to assist with insomnia and to help people who would like to improve their sleeping habits. It provides several key components: information about sleep and insomnia, strategies for improving sleep, relaxation skills (such as guided imagery, winding down, schedule worrying time) and a helpful sleep diary. It is one of the most comprehensive apps available for sleeping difficulties. To get the most benefit, make sure you have practised these skills before exam time comes around.

MEDITATION TIMER
Meditation is a great technique to learn, but it can sometimes feel a little overwhelming just sitting in silence for ages. Meditation Timer is a good start that allows you to set the duration and a repeating interval to hear a chime throughout your meditation. You can also choose from three different sounds. Remember, meditation is a skill, so don’t be put off if you find it quite difficult. It’s all about practice, practice and more practice.