SURVIVE EXAMS FOUR FREE APPS page 12

RAISE YOUR RESILIENCE page 2

TAKE THE CHALLENGE! page 5
End of semester can be a stressful time for those of you working hard to complete assessments and prepare for exams. Healthy habits such as exercise, eating well, getting a good night’s sleep, and spending time with friends and family tend to slip away to make room for study, study – and caffeine. Although this may seem like the only way to get through a heavy workload, at Counselling and Psychological Services we know the pitfalls of students studying too hard – burnout.

In this edition of CAPStivate we explore ways of building resilience to get you through the exam period by taking some time out of your vigorous study regime to energise and rejuvenate, including affordable recipes for wholesome food, fun things to do on a budget and strategies for maintaining healthy relationships. Don’t forget to enter the photo competition on page 14, to show off your snapshot skills.

So from the whole CAPStivate team, we wish you all the best with your exam preparations.

CAPStivate team
MY STORY

AARON RATHMELL

Aaron Rathmell graduated from the University of Sydney with a Bachelor of Economic and Social Sciences in 2006 and a Bachelor of Laws in 2008. He worked in Sydney for a year before making his way to Oxford to undertake a Master of Laws, then started the Bar course in London to become a Barrister.

Aaron now works in London at Serjeants’ Inn Chambers, mainly in public law, involving public authorities such as hospitals and the police, human rights law, discrimination, coronial inquests and public inquiries.

“The cases are pretty high pressure and involve long hours, but I don’t mind the hours when the work is so interesting and my colleagues are great,” Aaron says. “It’s a nice feeling when you get a just result.”

Aaron is still very close with his family in Sydney and he comes back as often as possible. However, London is “infinitely exciting”, Aaron says, and he can see himself living there for a long time.

The most interesting thing I’ve done in my life is... spending a few months in Cape York (in far north Queensland), helping with native title claims.

The one thing I am most proud of is... that I keep going.

People might be interested to know that... I am slightly taller than professional basketball player Muggsy Bogues (look him up).

What I have learned over the years is that... all that glitters is not gold; all that is gold does not glitter.

I’m a big fan of... American basketball.

I’m inspired by... setbacks.

I frequently remind myself that... other people get tired too. Invest in rest.

My favourite quote is... “Don’t worry, be happy,” by American singer and composer Bobby McFerrin.
Failed an exam? Got a disappointing mark for your assessment? When things go wrong, it’s normal to feel disappointed, frustrated, sad or angry, and perhaps even wanting to throw in the towel.

However, while some people will lose motivation and quit, others stay the course. What makes these two groups different? Resilience – the ability to recover. It is about getting back up when life knocks you down. Resilience sees the benefit in every situation and focuses on the task at hand; it is not ruled by negative emotions such as fear or disappointment. The good news is that resilience is a skill you can learn like any other.

Ten tips for building resilience

1. **Stay connected.** Spend time with people who are important to you. Getting involved in your community through volunteering or sport, for example, will help you develop a sense of purpose. Learn to give help, but also to accept help and support.

2. **Go easy on yourself.** When life gets rough it can magnify other daily stresses making your current challenges harder to face. Remember this and cut yourself (and those around you) some slack.

3. **Create an oasis from the storm.** Have a calm, relaxing place, such as your bedroom, where you can retreat when things get overwhelming and you need to take time out and re-group.

4. **Routines rule.** Times of major stress can be destabilising. Sticking to some simple daily routines, such as going for a walk every morning, will help restore a sense of stability and comfort to your life.

5. **Look after yourself.** Make sure you get enough sleep, eat well, exercise, and add some nice treats in your daily schedule to keep your body and mind running well.

6. **Take action.** Even when things seem out of control you can still take small steps towards your goals. Ask yourself what small action you can take today to move in the direction you want to go. Sometimes it’s a matter of putting one foot in front of the other, even if you don’t feel like it. For example, getting out of bed when you’d rather hide under the covers may be an accomplishment when times are hard.

7. **Have confidence in your ability to cope.** Remember times in your past when you faced difficult situations and coped even though you didn’t think you could at the time. What did you do? What helped you move forward? What strategies can you use again? What resources are available to you? (For example, a counsellor, a friend, or a book.)

8. **Acknowledge your emotions.** Strong emotions go hand-in-hand with tough times. Tell others how you are going and ask for help. If talking is difficult for you, write or draw whatever you are feeling.

9. **Gain perspective.** When bad things happen, it’s easy to get consumed by how things are right now and forget that you won’t always feel this way. Remember that nothing stays the same forever. Take time to consider what’s good in your life right now and what you might have learned from the current experience.

10. **Accept what cannot be changed and change what you can.** Sometimes, as a result of adverse situations you may have to consider altering your goals. You don’t have to like it or agree with it, but accepting the circumstances as they are right now will allow you to focus your attention on things you can change to make your situation better.

Q: I’m pretty much addicted to my phone. I spend most of my time on social media and it’s starting to affect my life. Can you help me get some balance?

A: Who doesn’t spend too much time on their phone? It is such an effective distraction and let’s face it, Facebook can be so much fun. But yes, probably 90 percent of the time we spend on our screens is wasted and, as a student with classes, assignments and exams, you probably don’t have much time to waste. So let’s look at some ways you can limit your time on social media.

1. Try setting aside an allocated time slot each day to check your social media (for example, on the train or bus, or during your lunch break). Setting limits will probably bring to light just how much time you spend online (this might surprise you), and will also allow you to see whether you can stick to the limits you set. If you can, that is great; but if you can’t, you may need to consider blocking your access to social media.

2. Have a look at the CAPS ebook for further information on how you can do this. sydney.edu.au/current_students/counselling/get-help/ebooks

Q: My friends think I’m drinking too much. How do I know if I have a problem?

A: A lot of socialising in Australia involves alcohol, so sometimes it is hard to avoid even if we want to. Working out if it’s a problem for you isn’t always easy. Many people drink for the buzz, which makes acknowledging the messy side difficult. Your friends obviously believe it’s an issue, but from your question it seems you’re not so sure. It might be useful to ask yourself these questions:

1. Are you drinking alcohol most nights?
2. Does drinking affect your relationships?
3. Do you find yourself drinking more than you plan to?

If the answer to these three questions is “yes”, it may be worth making some changes. Try setting yourself a challenge to cut down on your drinking and see what happens – the online OnTrack program might also be of help. www.ontrack.org.au/web/ontrack/programs/alcohol

If you struggle to do this, I would recommend accessing the Counselling and Psychological Services (CAPS) for further assistance.

Q: I really don’t enjoy having sex and my sex drive is low. This is having a big impact on my relationship. Is there something wrong with me?

A: First, there is nothing wrong with you. Low libido is common and it happens for a number of reasons. Low libido can result from a medical condition; it can be an unwelcome side-effect from medication; or can come on when we are feeling depressed, anxious or stressed.

Most people’s libidos are not constant and they fluctuate over time. The first and best thing you can do is to stop putting pressure on yourself to enjoy sex. The more pressure you feel, the less likely you will enjoy the experience. Speaking with your partner is also important – you each need to understand how the other is feeling. Being open and honest, even if it feels awkward, can help. Remember that sex is only one part of your relationship and you can still be intimate with each other in varying ways. For example, kissing, touching or oral sex can be just as pleasing.

For further help to understand why your sex drive is low or learn how to improve it, I would suggest you speak with your doctor. If you are experiencing pain during sex, it is important to see your doctor. He or she may also refer you to a psychologist.
How do you know if that person you’ve met and gone out with a few times is someone you could keep seeing and together possibly enter relationship territory? Entering a new relationship is an exciting time of discovery but also a time when strong feelings of vulnerability can surface. So let’s look at six ways to spot whether your love life is heading in the right direction:

**PHYSICAL ATTRACTION.**
Let’s just get it out of the way upfront: on some level physical attraction matters. It’s not about the person looking like some kind of Grecian deity, but it helps if there is a ‘spark’. However, a relationship based entirely on physical attraction is likely to struggle. Attraction isn’t something we can force to happen; either it’s there or it’s not.

**OPPOSITES REPEL**
What could start out as playful tension because you are so different, could become, well, just plain tension. In the long run, too many differences in key areas are very challenging for a relationship. Whilst not looking to date a clone of ourselves, it’s easier to understand and empathise when someone is more like us.

**SAME, SAME – BUT DIFFERENT**
A healthy relationship allows each person to be themselves and express points of difference without feeling they are less loveable or acceptable. Accepting and making the effort to understand one another’s differing points of view is a sign of a healthy and vibrant relationship.

**TO KNOW ME IS TO LOVE ME**
Genuine, non-judgemental curiosity about each other’s personality is vital. We really feel loved when we are loved for who we are. Do you get the sense that the person is trying to know you and understand you, or more that they want you to fit their image of the ideal partner? Do they try to see you for who you really are? Knowing both the big and the little things really counts.

**BREATHING SPACE**
Do you feel you need to spend every waking moment together? When you’ve just started dating this may be the case. However, a healthy relationship thrives on time together as well as time apart. Finding a balance and communicating our needs for closeness or space are important for going the distance.

**RUN TO THE HILLS**
Control freakishness and criticism are reliable signs that its time to engage reverse gear. These are never good signs and its usually only going to get worse.

So there you have it. It’s all about being deeply attracted to the person, being sort of similar in key aspects whilst embracing differences, working to really know and understand one another, whilst being able to maintain a sense of ourselves. Easy right?

There’s only one way to find out.
It’s June; the semester is nearly over, and exams are looming. If you are finding it difficult to stay focused, you’re not alone.

The good news is that you can train your brain to improve your attention span and depth. Think of attention as a muscle: your ability to focus will improve the more you work out. A great way to exercise your attention is through meditation. Meditation can also improve resilience, sleep and wellbeing.

**PAY ATTENTION**
Practise mindfulness meditation for five minutes everyday.

Here’s how: pay attention to your breathing. Take a few moments to notice the air entering and leaving your body, then start to count each breath in. When you get to ten, start again from one. If you get distracted, that’s okay, just notice that you’ve become distracted and start counting again from one. The idea is to pay attention to each breath. Do this for 5 minutes.

**TIPS FOR SUCCESS**
If you want to try some other types of meditation visit the CAPS website for a guided meditation recording.

– Try using idle time to train your brain, for example, sitting on the train, waiting in queues, sitting outside your lecture.
– If you think you will lose track of time, set a timer.
– Don’t worry if you forget to practise one day; Just do it the next day – some practice is better than none.
– Gradually increase the length of your practice.
BIG DAYS OUT
Now that the days are getting shorter and colder it can be tricky to balance study with fun. “I must study, I don’t have time for fun,” we hear you say. “You must make time for fun,” we say. Try our inexpensive autumn-inspired ideas to help keep the fun factor up.

**WALK AND TALK**
Just because summer has passed doesn’t mean there’s no joy to be had by the coast. Head out for a day of stunning views on the coast walk from Coogee to Bondi. Stop off at Clovelly Bowling Club for a beer with a breathtaking view or take a side trip through Waverley cemetery and see if you can find Henry Lawson’s grave. It’s easy to get the bus to Coogee or Bondi and there’s plenty to see along the way.

**SEE A PLAY**
The Griffin theatre in Kings Cross offers Monday evening rush tickets for the bargain price of $15. Tickets go on sale an hour before the show, first come, first served. For more information about the diverse and dynamic offerings on show at Griffin visit: griffintheatre.com.au

**GO TO MARKET**
You don’t have to go far from campus to come by some delicious seasonal produce and fine artisan food. The Eveleigh Farmers’ Market is held at Carriageworks on Wilson St every Saturday from 8am to 1pm – just a hop, step and a jump from Redfern station. Whether it’s good coffee or local vegetables you’re looking for, a trip to Eveleigh Markets is a great way to kick off the weekend. For more information visit: www.eveleighmarket.com.au

**SHARE A YARN**
On the last Wednesday of every month The Arthouse Hotel in the city hosts the Now Hear This storytelling slam. It’s a chance for people to get together to hear and tell true stories inspired by the theme for that month (think Irreversible, Unexpected, Envy). Stories can be funny, moving or silly and should be no longer than 5 minutes. For more information, visit: thearthousehotel.com.au/what-is-on/now-hear-this/

**FACE THE MUSIC**
Venue 505, offers a diverse range of live music six nights a week. Located on Cleveland Street, just a short walk from Central station, Venue 505 has free or reasonably priced ticketed shows. There’s no better way to rev up your week. For more information visit: www.venue505.com/music
Hopefully you’ve noticed some differences in your fitness after doing the first round of exercises (if you missed these check out the first edition of CAPStivate). This time around we’re going to change the exercises. This is important because over time your body gets used to any activity and stops getting the same gain.

LET’S GET PHYSICAL

CARDIO (15 MINUTES)
Method: Every minute on the minute (EMOTM)
Exercise: 20 seconds of standard push-ups
5 x bench/box jumps
Item required: stop watch/timer
Commence the exercise by completing 20 seconds of the maximum number of push-ups you can do, then immediately do 5 bench/box jumps.
Once completed, rest for the remaining time within that minute, then repeat the exercise and continue until you reach 15 minutes on your watch.

BODY WEIGHT CIRCUIT
This month we’re going to change a few of our exercises so your body doesn’t get lazy. Keep the same time for the exercise and rest periods, but add three exercises to mix it up.
1. Air squats
2. Jumping lunges (on the spot) NEW
3. Burpees
4. Elevated push-ups NEW
5. Crunches NEW

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 (4 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 four minutes is up.

Step 3 – Circuit exercises: Just like last time we’re going to follow the table below. Aim to do all the exercises in a row (that is, one circuit) before taking a break, and remember, we’re going for strong, controlled movements here. Finish well, not first.

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

Circuit schedule

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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.

Jumping lunges: Try these on the grass. Adopt the lunge position with one foot in front and one foot behind, hips lowered into a squat.
1. Begin with a normal lunge, with front leg at a 90 degree angle in the squat position and back leg behind you
2. Squat body up into a jump
3. In the air, move back leg in front, and front leg in back
4. Go straight into lunge with opposite legs
5. Keep chest and torso upright and engaged throughout entire movement.

Crunches:
1. Lie on your back with your knees bent and feet flat on the floor, hip-width apart.
2. Place your hands behind your head so your thumbs are behind your ears, but don’t lace your fingers together.
3. Hold your elbows out to the sides but rounded slightly in.
4. Tilt your chin slightly, leaving about 10 centimetres between your chin and your chest.
5. Gently pull your abdominals inward.
6. Curl up and forward so that your head, neck, and shoulder blades lift off the ground.
7. Hold for a moment at the top of the movement then slowly lower.

Burpee: These are those leapfrog things you may have seen people in boot camps 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

Elevated push-up: Same as standard push-up, however, do them with your feet on a step or bench to add a degree of difficulty and work different muscles in your back/shoulders

Keep it up everyone and I’ll see you in the next edition ready for more.

Disclaimer: While the information provided in this article is by a personal trainer, this is not substitute for personal liaison with a health practitioner. CAPS accepts no responsibility for any injury incurred as a result of attempting these exercises.
BOOK REVIEW

THE SECRET RIVER
BY KATE GRENVILLE

The Secret River, by the University of Sydney graduate and Honorary Doctorate recipient Kate Grenville, is an Australian classic.

The novel, published in 2005, traces the story of William Thornhill, a London thief transported to Australia in the early 1800s. Thornhill acquires land in the Hawkesbury region (the land of the Darug people) and as the tragic forces of colonisation unfold so begins a seemingly familiar and inevitable story. The narrative is however remarkable in its depth, inviting the reader to participate in an emotional journey.

Crafting a deep sense of place, Grenville recreates the mysterious, breathing, sighing, weeping landscape of the ancient Hawkesbury region. At the same time, we grow intimate with the daily lives of Thornhill and his family as they struggle both with forging a sense of belonging in this elusive place, and with living alongside the Darug people.

Grenville creates a deep empathy with her characters, without moral judgement or rational analysis and herein lies so much of the novel’s power. The reader feels the full force of the unfolding events deeply. History becomes personal story and the reader is a silent, grieving witness.

Don’t miss this; put it on your ‘must read’ list. Not only is it a remarkable work of art, it is a reminder of the power of writing to transport the reader to another place and another time — and the place and time of The Secret River are deeply important in understanding the history that has shaped Australia.
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/sudokuans

**PUZZLE 1 (VERY HARD)**

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**PUZZLE 4 (MEDIUM)**

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QUICK LEMONY ZUCCHINI WITH CHICKEN (OR TOFU)

Here is an easy dinner you can whip up in no time. Make enough so you have leftovers for lunch the next day.

Serves 4
Approximate cost: $13.65

INGREDIENTS
2 tablespoons olive oil
1 onion, diced
500g minced chicken (you can also use pork or beef mince, or for vegetarians, use tofu)
3 medium-sized zucchini, sliced into thin rounds
Freshly ground pepper
1 tablespoon soy sauce
1 lemon, juiced
Rice noodles or rice (cooked according to directions on packet)

METHOD
Heat oil in a large frying pan, cook onion over medium heat until translucent. Turn up heat to medium high and add chicken mince (or tofu) stirring and breaking up the mince until it changes colour. Add zucchini and continue to stir until the chicken (or tofu) is lightly browned and the zucchini is soft. Season with soy sauce and pepper to taste. Add lemon juice to taste. Serve over rice or rice noodles. Enjoy.

OPTIONAL MENU CHANGES
– use other green vegetables such as English spinach or sliced green beans
– add 1-2 cloves of garlic when onion is almost cooked and saute for 1 minute
– add 1-2 teaspoons dried chilli or sliced fresh chilli.
EXAM COUNTDOWN
Do you avoid thinking about exams? Do you pretend you still have weeks and weeks to prepare? If that sounds familiar, this app can help. It tells you how many days, hours, and minutes you have until your exam. This can help motivate you to hit the books before it’s too late.

Available on the App Store
Available on Google Play

YOGA
Ever feel sore or stiff after countless hours of studying? Yoga has great health benefits and this app can teach you some of the basic postures in no time. Both apps have yoga routines and videos instructions for each pose. Go on, stretch out those sore muscles.

Available on the App Store
Available on Google Play

POMODORO TIMER
Do you procrastinate or get distracted when you should be studying or working on an assignment? If this sounds familiar, try the Pomodoro technique. It is a highly effective time management tool that involves working for periods of 25 minutes (by setting a timer) then having a five-minute break. The app allows you to develop a list of tasks for the day and track them to completion. You can generate a report at the end of the day to see how effectively you’ve worked.

Available on the App Store
Available on Google Play

BLOCK THE INTERNET
Are you constantly checking Facebook when you should be writing an essay? Or perhaps you are distracted by a pending battle in League of Legends? Download this app to eliminate online distractions by temporarily blocking internet sites on your mobile. Simply add the websites you want to block and the period of time to block them for. Guaranteed to get you focused on that assignment.

Available on the App Store
Available on Google Play

FOUR FREE APPS TO HELP YOU SURVIVE EXAMS
Assignments are due and exams are looming. Here are some apps to help you manage your anxiety – and your workload.
Take a great portrait and you could win a $50 voucher at JB Hi-Fi.

Show us your people skills by snapping a portrait of anyone you like (think friends, family, or even a stranger). Email it to us by midnight on Friday 4 July and you’ll be in the running.

A few points to bear in mind:

– Email your entry to caps.competitions@sydney.edu.au; make sure you include your contact details and a brief description of the photo.
– Photos need to be digital, in JPEG format, and five megabytes or smaller.
– Keep it simple – entries deemed to have been heavily digitally manipulated will not be accepted. Digital photo development however, is permitted (e.g. white balance, levels etc).
– Make sure you have a model release form signed if taking a formal portrait.
– Click here for full terms and conditions

We will decide the winner on Monday 10 July. If you win, we’ll let you know by email, and we’ll publish your name and winning entry in the next edition of CAPStivate.

Happy snapping.