HOW TO STOP PUTTING THINGS OFF page 5

MAKE NEW FRIENDS IN SYDNEY page 11

BIG DAYS OUT IN SPRING! page 8
We’re almost over the finishing line! 2014 certainly has been quite a year hasn’t it? If you’re anything like the rest of us, you’re a bit tired. In fact, you’re probably begrudgingly facing the assessment gauntlet right now. Paradoxical as it may seem, the solution is not to lock yourself away in the library until the exams are finished. Rather, the key to building resilience is balance.

Daily stressors deplete energy reserves, so in this issue of CAPStivate we outline a few strategies to help you avoid procrastination. This way, you can invest the extra time into activities that replenish your physical, mental and emotional reserves. Restoring your balance will allow you to respond to the challenge of exams and assessments without falling apart.

We hope it’s been a great year for you. Best of luck with any assessments and exams still to come your way. And remember, when in doubt, find your balance.

CAPStivate team
Dr Habib currently works for UNICEF Pakistan as a Communication for Development Specialist, and is the Provincial Team Leader in Balochistan, one of the four provinces of Pakistan.

Leading a team of 300 social mobilisers for the Polio Eradication Initiative, her work involves improving awareness, modifying attitudes and changing behaviors about vaccination among the most vulnerable communities in the province.

“Pakistan is one of the three countries in the world where polio is still endemic, and 90 percent of the cases of polio in 2014 across the globe are identified in Pakistan”, Dr Habib said.

The prime focus of her work is to improve acceptance of polio vaccination and dispel misconceptions associated with polio vaccines in this area.

_The one thing I am most proud of is …_ I am a working woman in a leadership position. I have stood against all the odds in a male dominated society, which is very challenging. I have had to fight discrimination and stereotyping everyday, but this enables me to be a role model for other women and encourage them to dream and move forward.

_People might be interested to know that …_ Balochistan has one of the highest child mortality rates in the region – 111 children out of every thousand live births do not make it to their fifth birthday. Of these deaths, 60 percent could be prevented, as they are attributable to diarrhoea, pneumonia and diseases preventable by vaccines.

_What I have learned over the years is that …_ life goes on, just do your best and prepare for the worst.

_I’m inspired by …_ the polio vaccinators and health workers who put their lives at risk everyday in Pakistan and Afghanistan to get children vaccinated despite threats from militants. A prime challenge is the threat faced by female polio vaccinators who go door to door to immunise children. Indeed, the militants who have banned polio vaccination have killed more than 30 vaccinators in the line of duty since December 2012.

_I am a strong advocate of …_ girls’ education. Where I come from, the literacy rates are very low for females. Only 27 percent of women are literate in Balochistan and nearly 70 percent of the girls do not attend school.

_I frequently remind myself …_ to take one step at a time.

_My favourite quote is …_ there is only one thing that makes a dream impossible to achieve: the fear of failure.
One of the wonderful things about studying at university is the summer holidays! Three months without the demands of semester to enjoy the beach, work to save some money, or maybe have the opportunity to head off on an adventure. In this final edition of CAPStivate for 2014, we explore volunteering as one way to make the most of your break.

Volunteering is a fabulous way to explore your interests, contribute to the community, build your CV and boost your mood. While the focus of volunteering is on contributing time, energy and skills, there is a lot of research showing that helping others increases happiness for the helper. Perhaps this isn’t surprising when you consider that volunteering can expose you to new experiences and ideas, connect you with different people and give you a sense of purpose and meaning. Whether your motivation is skill development or self development, volunteering may be the ticket.

If you’re considering volunteer work, the first step is getting some clarity around what you’re up for. Have a think about what’s most important and interesting to you. Here are some questions you might like to consider:

– Why you want to volunteer?
– Consider your skillset. Would you like to contribute using skills you already have or develop new skills?
– What are you hoping to get out of the volunteering experience?
– Who would you like to work with?
– Are you passionate about nature and the outdoors?
– Is creativity something you can harness and share with others?
– Would you like to live in a society that’s inclusive of its more vulnerable members?
– Do you want to do something with sport?
– Do you particularly enjoy connecting with people?
– Also have a think about how much time you can realistically commit, over what period, and how much responsibility you are willing to take on.

Once you’ve had a think, it’s time to start exploring what’s out there. To help, we’ve listed some starting points for local and international volunteering opportunities. Given the length of the uni break, we’ve mainly focused on short-term volunteering options, but there are also lots of longer-term opportunities out there too.

LOCAL VOLUNTEERING OPPORTUNITIES
Your local council’s website might be a good place to start. A variety of positions are often listed (such as bushcare projects, library volunteers, delivery of meals on wheels). If you’re passionate about conservation, check out what’s on offer at www.conservationvolunteers.com.au

For a broad search covering opportunities in everything from animal welfare to sport to human rights, try these sites:

www.govolunteer.com.au
www.dosomethingnearyou.com.au

INTERNATIONAL VOLUNTEERING OPPORTUNITIES
The breadth of international volunteering opportunities is exciting! It is worth noting there is typically a bit of planning and a financial cost involved in short-term international volunteer projects. To get your imagination firing, check out:

www.ivp.org.au
www.projects-abroad.com.au
Procrastination is putting off the things that you need or want to do. We’re all guilty of this at one time or another. However, procrastination can really have an impact when it goes into overdrive.

Sometimes we procrastinate because:

– we fear we are not good enough
– we fear we might fail, or
– we fear rejection.

There are always various justifications for putting things off, but inevitably we start missing out on some really wonderful and important experiences. If that wasn’t enough, procrastination can increase stress, which has a negative effect on our daily lives.

Procrastinators are made, not born. That’s both the good news and the bad news. It’s good because a learned response can be unlearned (with practice). The bad news is that while it’s possible to change, it takes consistent effort and you may have to tolerate some discomfort along the way.

So as exams roll around, let’s look at getting on top of procrastination.

**CHALLENGE**

1. Make a list of everything you have to do.
2. Break it down into specific tasks.
3. Prioritise the most important.
4. Choose one small thing that you’ve been putting off.
5. Promise yourself a reward.

If you can do just one thing that you have avoided, and keep it up each day, then you are well on your way to retraining yourself out of the procrastination habit.
I read recently there are many benefits to practising mindfulness. What is mindfulness and what are some of these benefits?

Mindfulness is a practice that’s really taking off. It is essentially learning to notice the present moment and not get grumpy at yourself when you can’t. Once you learn how to do this, you can begin to deal with many of the causes of everyday stress such as anxiety-provoking thoughts about the past or future, and any other stressful phenomena such as time pressure, frustration, disappointment and distraction.

Mindfulness can be achieved in a number of ways. Firstly, you can jump headfirst into a formal meditation practice where you train yourself to be aware of present-moment events such as your breath, body sensations or external stimuli such as sounds.

If that all sounds like a bit much, work on incorporating some simple exercises into your day-to-day life, such as trying to be really focused on the process of eating your next meal. It sounds strange, but most of us don’t really pay attention to the smell and flavours of our food. We just gulp it down and then move onto our next task.

If you’re interested in learning more about mindfulness, check out our CAPS website (sydney.edu.au/current_students/counselling/get-help/guided-exercises/mindfulness.shtml) or join us each semester for the Acceptance and Commitment Therapy group where we teach the basic skills of mindfulness (and a few other tricks).

I am working on a group assignment and I’m having trouble with a group member. I feel like they’re not pulling their weight and I have to do extra work because of this. What should I do?

It can be tough working with others, especially if they have different work ethics and study patterns. Before taking matters further, it is useful to ask other members of the group if they feel the same way about this person. If the group agrees, then you can take some action.

We recommend you firstly have a discussion with the person about how you are feeling. Explain to them in a firm but polite way that you feel the work distribution is not equal. If possible, use concrete examples, and of course stick to the facts. Be specific about what you want to change. It is important not to be aggressive in your communication.

The advance of this approach is that it gives the person ample warning to change their behaviour, and also gives them an opportunity to explain possible reasons why they’re not pulling their weight (are they going through a difficult time that is distracting them from their studies?).

If this approach does not work, the next step is to take your concern to your tutor and/or lecturer. The academic staff might be able to mark your work separately, or speak directly with the particular group member.

Working with other people does require a specific skillset – and a lot of patience! For more tips and tricks, have a look at the CAPS ebook on Communicating Effectively: sydney.edu.au/current_students/counselling/get-help/ebooks/lifestyle-issues.shtml

Do I really need to go to lectures? (they’re all recorded after all)

Hmmm … good question. If all of your lectures are recorded, then theoretically you don’t have to attend (and let’s face it, listening at home in your pyjamas is much more comfortable). But, you need to be careful. It is common for people to skip lectures and tell themselves they will listen to the recording instead, but it doesn’t always happen. It’s really easy to get into a cycle in which you miss classes and then also get behind listening to the recordings – thereby falling behind in your work.

There are also many benefits from physically attending your lectures. You will likely find that you take more in when you are listening to someone speak right in front of you. Also, in lectures, if you don’t understand something, you will have more chance to get clarification, either during or after the lecture. Plus, it is a great way to form relationships with other classmates taking the subject, which can be really useful during assessment and exam periods.

The recordings are there to use. However, we recommend they only be used as a backup if needed.
Movies, songs and poetry often depict relationships as either blissful romance or unbearable torment. Unfortunately, these perspectives don’t tend to line up with reality and can badly skew our expectations of relationships. Here we debunk three common relationship myths:

**FINDING ‘THE ONE’**

Do you love your mum, dad, brother, sister or best friend? If you answer ‘yes’, then you’ve also solved the puzzle as to why there is no single ‘one’. We love many people across our lives. It’s a simple fact.

And of course this goes for romantic relationships too. The concept of ‘the one’ might seem enticing, but it just doesn’t add up, and puts a person on a pedestal that no one can live up to. The challenge is to treat romantic relationships in the same way as we treat our other close relationships (with a few added benefits of course).

This means understanding that no relationship will ever make us feel 100 percent happy all of the time. It also means making space for tough times and being willing to reflect on how relationships can be improved.

**COMPLETING EACH OTHER**

We like to be close to the ones we love, but being too close means we can sometimes lose our sense of self. While research clearly shows that it is important for couples to have some shared activities, it’s also very clear that a healthy relationship is made up of two ‘individuals’ not one amalgamated entity.

It’s important to recognise that every person comes to a relationship with their own past and story. They are already a complete person. A successful relationship needs to continue this story in a collaborative way, not attempt to fix a deficit.

**PEOPLE IN GREAT RELATIONSHIPS NEVER ARGUE**

The first time a couple has a disagreement can be very uncomfortable and one or both partners may be concerned this is a sign they are not ‘right’ for one another.

The reality is that conflict (so long as it’s not physical) is part of any healthy relationship. Conflict is an opportunity to learn more about your partner and to understand their perspective as well as your own. When conflict is used as a way of learning about each other it can actually become a way to develop even more intimacy and grow as a couple.

So next time you hear someone mention ‘the one’ or a ‘perfect relationship’, rest assured – there is no such thing. However a great relationship is obtainable, as long as you are willing to put in the work to make it great!
Spring has sprung! Not long to go before summer and the freedom of the long break. While you work your way through the rest of the semester, it’s important to take some time to enjoy the sunshine. Here are some ideas to get you started.

**HEAD TO HYDE PARK FOR NOODLES**
Make the most of Good Food Month in October with a trip (or two!) to the Asian-inspired night noodle markets. It’s a feast for food lovers and a great way to enjoy the spring night air. The night noodle markets run from 10 to 27 October in Hyde Park North. For more information, visit [sydney.goodfoodmonth.com/noodles](http://sydney.goodfoodmonth.com/noodles)

**HIRE A KAYAK AND PADDLE ON THE HARBOUR**
Make the most of the warmer weather by exploring some of Sydney’s beautiful waterways on a kayak. Wherever you live in Sydney, there is the opportunity to get out on the water and hire a kayak for some outdoor exercise and fun. It’s a great way to explore the waterways – everywhere from Middle Harbour to Berowra Waters to Penrith. Kayak hire is about $20 per hour. For more info, check out these sites: [www.sydneykayak.com](http://www.sydneykayak.com) [www.sydneyharbourkayaks.com.au](http://www.sydneyharbourkayaks.com.au)

**HAVE A LAUGH**
What better way to keep assessments in perspective than having a good laugh? You don’t even have to leave campus to find some funny business. Every Wednesday from 1pm, Manning Bar plays host to a weekly comedy show featuring students, local and international comedians. For more info, see [www.manningbar.com/Regular-Events.aspx](http://www.manningbar.com/Regular-Events.aspx)

Further afield, other local options include the open mic night on Thursdays at The Friend In Hand in Glebe ($10) or Saturday night shows at the Happy Endings Comedy Club in Kings Cross (around $25). For more details, check out: [amincinhand.com](http://amincinhand.com) [www.happyendingscomedyclub.com.au](http://www.happyendingscomedyclub.com.au)

**EXPLORE THE WEIRD AND WONDERFUL ON CAMPUS**
Feel like doing something different between classes? How about a trip to the *Stitched, Stuffed and Studied: Taxidermy in the 19th Century* exhibition at the Nicholson Museum. Starting in November, the exhibition will be open from 10am to 4.30pm each weekday in the Quad. For more info, visit [sydney.edu.au/museums/exhibitions-events/stitched-stuffed-studied](http://sydney.edu.au/museums/exhibitions-events/stitched-stuffed-studied)

**GO FOR A RIDE**
Springtime in Sydney is the perfect time for a bike ride. Sunshine, fresh air and exercise are all ingredients of a fabulous adventure. If you’d like to experience the thrill of riding your bike across the Harbour Bridge, why not book in for the Spring Cycle on 19 October, Sydney’s largest recreational bike ride. Registration starts at $30. For information, visit [www.springcycle.com.au](http://www.springcycle.com.au)


**A NIGHT AT THE THEATRE**
Engage your mind with a performance at New Theatre in Newtown. One of Australia’s oldest continuously producing theatre companies, it presents diverse theatre that always provokes and stimulates audiences. On Thursdays, all tickets are $17 while student rush tickets (also $17) are available half an hour before most performances. For information on upcoming shows and tickets, visit [newtheatre.org.au/whats-on/season-2014](http://newtheatre.org.au/whats-on/season-2014)
Tabata workout (one minute rest between each set)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>SET 1</th>
<th>SET 2</th>
<th>SET 3</th>
<th>SET 4</th>
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<td>Sit-ups</td>
<td>Plank</td>
<td>Push-ups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jumping Jacks</td>
<td>Squats</td>
<td>Side plank on the right</td>
<td>Jump squat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alternating lunges forward</td>
<td>Side lunges</td>
<td>Side plank on the left</td>
<td>Alternating scissor jumps</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alternating lunges backward</td>
<td>Burpees</td>
<td>Sit-ups</td>
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KALE CHIPS

Who doesn’t love to snack while studying? And hands up if you find it a challenge to fit in the five serves of veggies we’re all supposed to be eating? Enter the kale chip, a tasty moreish snack and a sneaky way to eat green veg in the one delicious crunchy package.

Kale chips are really expensive to buy, but cheap and super easy to make. Here’s how.

INGREDIENTS
1 bunch of kale – Tuscan or curly
a little olive oil – about a tablespoon
a sprinkle of salt

METHOD
Preheat your oven to 140 degrees Celsius. Wash the kale and dry on a clean tea towel or in a salad spinner. Remove the leaves from the stems, tear into chip-sized pieces, and place in a large bowl.

Drizzle oil over the top, add salt and massage the oil and salt over the leaves until they have a light, even coverage.

Arrange the leaves on a baking tray so they are not touching. If you have baking paper, you can line the tray to make washing up easier. You may need to do two or more batches of kale chips, or use several trays.

Bake until the leaves are crisp (10 to 15 minutes). Check them after 10 minutes and don’t let them brown or they will taste bitter.

Spice it up!
Add chilli powder, paprika, grated parmesan, or anything else you can think of.
TIPS ON MAKING FRIENDS IN SYDNEY

Finding it difficult to connect in Sydney? Perhaps you recently arrived in town or you just want to widen your existing social circle. Either way, the best way to meet new people is to put yourself out there! Here are some ideas to get the ball rolling.

MEETUP
Meetup (the website and app) has the world’s largest network of local groups. It helps people to meet up in their area to participate in a shared interest.

In Sydney, you can join Meetup groups involving fitness, book clubs, film, pets, hiking, photography, writing and many other activities. There is even a group for vegans. See what’s happening near you and join a group today.

www.meetup.com

ANOMO
Do you feel social media has become unauthentic, with users posting heavily photoshopped profile pictures, and apps like Tinder promoting appearance as the sole criteria to decide whether you want to get to know someone?

There is another way. Anomo is a new app that allows you to interact anonymously. You create an avatar and can ‘check in’ to locations like a local café to see if other users are present.

With time, you connect with more people in the network and you can gradually reveal more information about yourself. Eventually, if you want to, you can share a photo of yourself.

Features include the ability to chat one-on-one, have a group chat with people nearby, and play icebreaker games to discover things about other users.

JOIN A CLUB OR SOCIETY
Being a University of Sydney student gives you access to more than 200 clubs and societies, so there’s bound to be something that takes your fancy.

Joining a club or society is also a great way to meet new friends who share your interests.

See the full list of clubs and societies at www.usu.edu.au/Clubs-Societies.aspx

Disclaimer: The University is not responsible for, and accepts no liability with respect to the apps mentioned above. Please be cautious when interacting with other individuals on these platforms.