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centre for
positive psychology
and health

The Science of Health and Happiness for Young People

Lecture 3: Time management, self-discipline and motivation

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RCSI Science of Health and Happiness for Young People Notes for Lecture 3

1. The way we think about things is very important; If you change the way you look at things, the things you look at, change.
2. “When we are no longer able to change a situation, we are challenged to change ourselves.”
Viktor E. Frankl;
3. “My captors could take away my liberty but they could not take my freedom to choose my response” *Viktor E. Frankl*
4. It is important to distinguish between the things we can control and those we can't. A **proactive** focus is concerned with focusing on what we can control. The Stoic philosophers made this a central tenet of their thinking.
5. The language we use with ourselves and with others has a significant impact on how we think and feel. Important to distinguish between **reactive** and **proactive** language.

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1. **Motivation** is what drives our behaviour; Maslow famously set out human needs in a pyramid in which the lower levels had to be satisfied before the higher levels.
2. Anything that drives you to do something can be seen by your brain as a motivator: e.g. food, money, grades, acceptance by peers, winning in sport; Your brain releases a pleasurable chemical called **dopamine** just for trying; You feel satisfaction when you have given it your best effort.
3. “**Learned Helplessness**” refers to our becoming demotivated when we experience failure - the negative motivation transfers to subsequent tasks. The opposite is also true – success breeds success.
4. If you are struggling to complete something difficult: (i) Take a break; (ii) Do something you are good at; (iii) Go back to the task with renewed energy and confidence.
5. If your goal is daunting: (i) Break it down into smaller tasks; (ii) Use a checklist- writing out each step has been shown to make it easier to achieve each step
6. “Gamification” is a way in which we can increase our motivation by turning tasks into fun

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Managing our time

1. Distinguish between urgency and importance
2. Think of and plan time in longer blocks – such as a week
3. Cut down time spent in QIII and QIV – learn to say “No”
4. Increase time spent in QII

Putting first things first

	Urgent	Not urgent
Important	<p>I</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">•Crises•Deadlines•Problems <p>Procrastinator</p>	<p>II</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">•Prevention•Planning•Values•Relationships•Goals <p>Prioritiser</p>
Not Important	<p>III</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">•Texts•Interruptions•Phone calls•Popular activity <p>“Yes” person</p>	<p>IV</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">•Trivia•Junk mail•Time wasters•Escape actions <p>Slacker</p>

Further exploration

Covey, S (1998) The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens. New York, Simon and Schuster

Covey S (2015) First things first. YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Cw1_l6oKr1s

Brainchild: Motivation. Netflix: <https://www.netflix.com/watch/80215241?trackId=14277283&tctx=-97%2C-97%2C%2C%2C%2C>

Pink D (2009) The Puzzle of Motivation. Ted talk:
https://www.ted.com/talks/dan_pink_the_puzzle_of_motivation?language=en

Urban T. (2016) Inside the mind of a master procrastinator. Ted talk:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=arj7oStGLkU>