How can we help our students flourish?

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Objectives of this presentation

How can we help our students flourish in Higher education?
• Background info research/clarification language
• As they arrive
• Through “the middle years slump” and
• As they prepare to move on
• Key messages about the stages and how curricula might impact on students’ ability to flourish.

ICEBREAKER

What are the first 3 words that come to mind when you hear the word ‘wellbeing’?
What about “mental health in HE”?

WELLBEING
• Defined by the World Health Organisation Constitution (1946) as: Wellbeing is a keyword in the WHO definition of health: “a state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity”
MENTAL HEALTH

Defined by the World Health Organisation (2005) as:

A state of well-being in which every individual realizes his or her own potential, can cope with normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community.

THE MENTAL HEALTH CONTINUUM

- Professor Keyes' continuum (2002)

PART I – THE FLOURISHING STUDENT

A NEW GENERATION

'Poor little snowflake' - the defining insult of 2016

Collins dictionary defines a snowflake as 'a person, esp a young person, viewed as lacking resilience and being excessively prone to taking offense.'

SOME COMMON TRAITS

GENERATION SNOWFLAKE OR A NEW EVOLVING GENERATION?

REASONS BEHIND THIS INCREASED STRESS
REASONS BEHIND THIS INCREASED STRESS (2)

August 18, 2019

1. https://www.colorbox.com
2. https://www.istockphoto.com

FLOURISHING AND LANGUISHING STUDENTS

Discount code – FlourishingHE

FLOURISHING AND LANGUISHING

NOT JUST MENTAL HEALTH

A partnership with an Occupational Psychologist
Can we easily identify a student Flourishing or Languishing through a test?

2 surveys
TB1 – 216 responses
January 2019 – 170 responses to date

Are there changes?
Interviews with 12 students
Same set of questions as asked for the book

SOME COMMON THEMES

Some common themes involve fluctuations in emotional well-being and resilience.
WHAT IS REQUIRED TO FLOURISH

At the start

CULTURE SHOCK

THERE SEEMS TO BE A LINK BETWEEN CULTURAL AGILITY AND FLOURISHING?

FLOURISHING STAFF CULTURALLY AGILE

WHAT IS REQUIRED TO FLOURISH
In the slump years and move to world of work

WHAT IS REQUIRED TO FLOURISH

AUTONOMOUS MOTIVATION

WHAT IS REQUIRED TO FLOURISH

A SENSE OF BELONGING

WHAT IS REQUIRED TO FLOURISH

BUILDING STRONG RELATIONSHIPS

WHAT IS REQUIRED TO FLOURISH

AUTONOMY

WHAT IS REQUIRED TO FLOURISH

COMPETENCE
PART II – THE FLOURISHING STAFF

IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO HAVE ‘A FLOURISHING STUDENT’ AND INSTITUTION WITHOUT FLOURISHING STAFF

IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO HAVE ‘A FLOURISHING STUDENT’ AND INSTITUTION WITHOUT FLOURISHING STAFF

Remember to put your own oxygen mask first

MAINTAINING YOUR OWN WELLBEING

DO YOU KNOW WHAT RECHARGES YOUR BATTERIES?

Mine are: my family, mindfulness and being in nature. What about you?

WE ARE ALL PART OF THE SYSTEM... PART OF THE PROBLEM

WE ARE ALL PART OF THE SOLUTIONS...

Student mental wellbeing is a condition (or pre-requisite) for effective learning (Seligman, 2012).
So is staff mental wellbeing.
Emerging evidence confirms that student wellbeing can be cultivated and supported through intentional curriculum design. (Slavin, Schindler & Chibnall 2014; Tang & Ferguson, 2014)
A healthy university is defined as one that: ‘aspires to create a learning environment and organizational culture that enhances the health, wellbeing and sustainability of its community and enables people to achieve their full potential’ (Dooris, Cawoon, Doherty & Powell, 2010).

GREAT EXAMPLES FROM AUSTRALIA AND CANADA

What can we influence?

Covey’s Circles of Influence

We have seen what we can do at:
- Individual level?
- Family level (your team)?
- Community (school/Faculty)?
- Institutional level?
- Society level?

Take 1 or 2 minutes to reflect on these two questions

WHAT CAN YOU INFLUENCE?

TO FINISH – HERE ARE A FEW QUESTIONS TO THINK ABOUT FOR NEXT SESSION:

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THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME ANY QUESTIONS/COMMENTS?
Bibliography