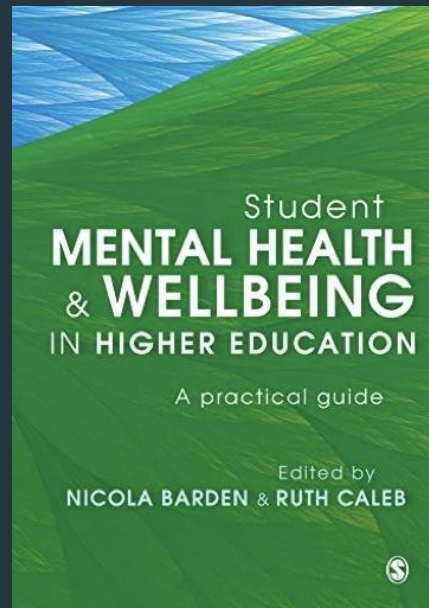


# Staying well in an uncertain world: skills for life

- Dr Dominique Thompson
- Former university GP
- author and
- student mental health expert
- @drdomthompson



# Who am I?



# What is good mental health?

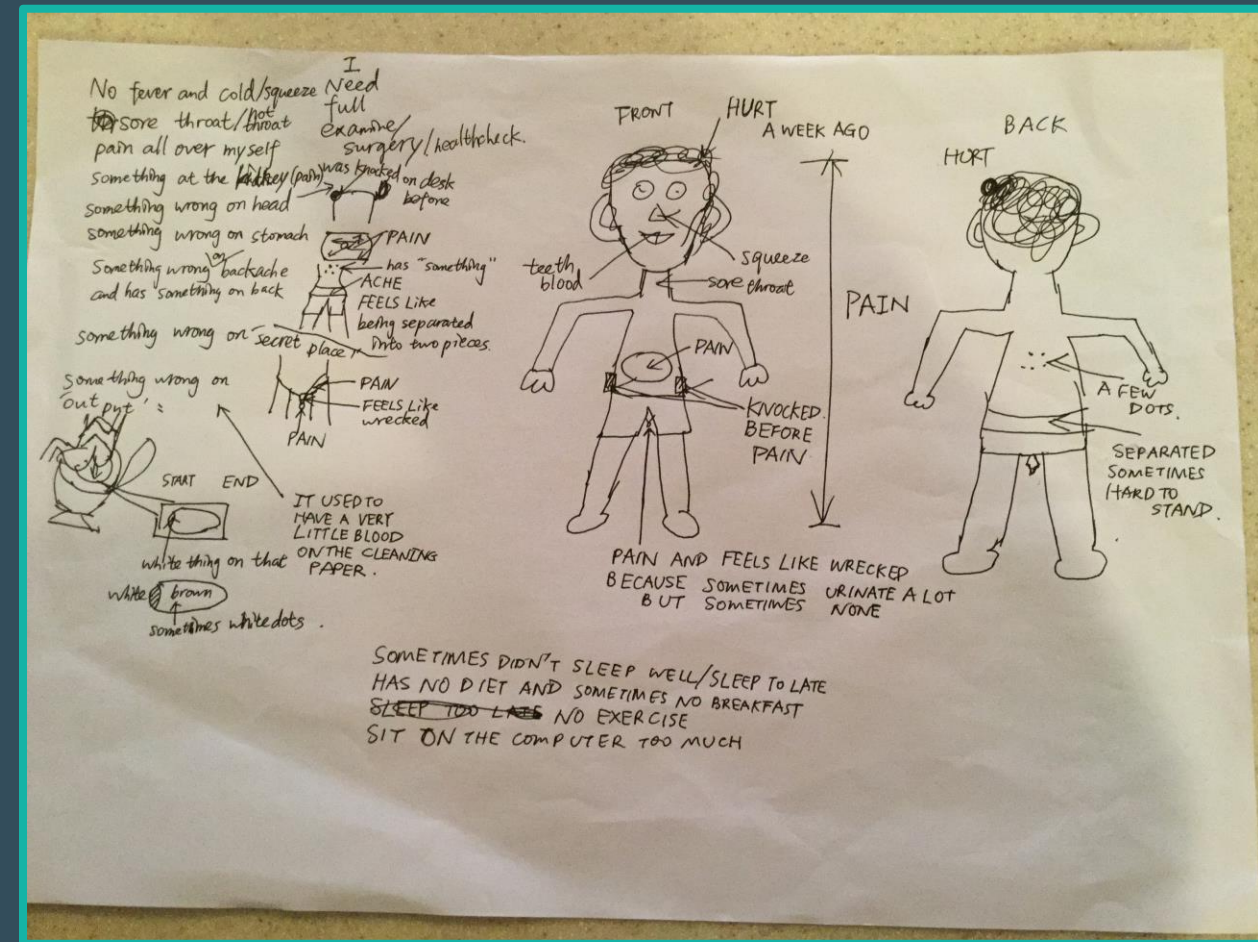
- "A state of wellbeing in which you feel and function well"
- Everybody has mental health
- It changes all the time...
- Need to be well and stay well to study well!
- Sometimes we need help to be/ stay well






# What to watch out for in yourself?

- Cloudy thinking/ 'Brain fog'
- Flat or numb feeling
- Feeling on edge all the time/ 'sick in stomach'
- Loss or increased appetite
- Avoiding meals/ binging on food/ secret eating
- Poor sleep
- Tired all the time
- Angry, irritable or tearful most days
- Stopped enjoying usual activities
- Can't make decisions/ focus/ concentrate/ motivate self
- Cutting/ burning/ scratching/ hitting self
- Work, life, friends suffering because of how you feel



Life skills – because...  
Life is not a straight  
path- it's wiggly!

- Build your network
- Try new things
- Find purpose
- And one more secret ingredient for wellbeing ...



LIFE IS  
WIGGLY



# Build your network- Find your tribe!

- From your course/ job
- From your accommodation
- From your activities and interests
- From the wider community
- By volunteering

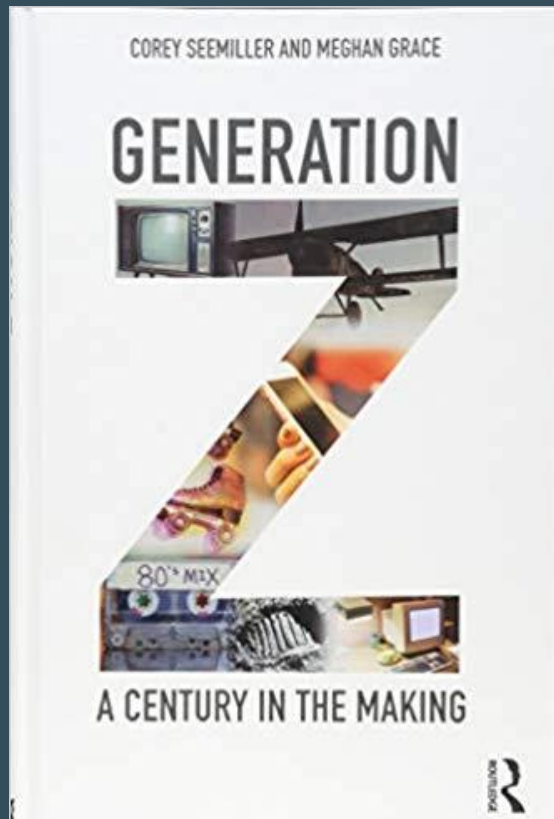


# Common academic problems



- Perfectionism
- Procrastination
- Imposter syndrome
- Fear of failure

# Why are more young people expressing distress, or in crisis?



Failure

that the most prominent worry for this generation is not being successful, which garnered discussion among 300 surveyed.<sup>9</sup> Particularly, they focused on worrying about their own expectations, disappointing others, having a difference.<sup>10</sup> The fear of failure or disappointing others is the notion that many in Generation Z are motivated by others<sup>11</sup> and care deeply about others' perceptions.

Some participants also shared the fear of making mistakes, rejecting opportunities, regretting decisions, or being average.<sup>13</sup> The fear of failure is also present in that many in Generation Z are worried about their future in college, the linearly increasing pressure to succeed, and 2016 dueling with the belief that the world is demanding of more demands. [they] are not themselves."

*I worry that I will fail. I worry that I won't be smart enough, or fast enough, or skilled enough, or driven enough, or kind enough, or successful enough. I worry that I won't like myself when I look in the mirror. ))*

Member of Generation Z

- Fear of failure
- Fear of letting people down
- Lack of purpose



# Remember! Try new things

- Don't be afraid to get things wrong
- Be aware of perfectionism
- Let mistakes go/ accept 'good enough'
- Take reasonable risks/ opportunities
- Don't worry so much about 'letting people down'
- Normalize/ learn to live with uncertainty in life
- Tell someone how you feel



LIVE,  
WORK,  
CREATE.

Finding 'purpose' - a  
reason to get up  
each day- takes time





What can we  
all do to help  
ourselves and  
others?



# What do I do if I'm worried about my stress/mental health?

- **Don't** ignore it
- Talk to someone... kind & non-judgmental, who will listen (mentor/tutor/ GP/ Counsellor)
- Please ask for help if you need it (we want to help)
- Earlier is better
- Online options for more info
- Confidential services at uni/ in NHS
- YOU ARE NOT ALONE





# How do I look after myself?

- Remember, you're human!
- Sleep
- Diet
- Exercise
- Activities/ nature
- Moderate screen time
- Take breaks
- Spend time with other humans (in person if possible!)



# Remember that 'Secret ingredient'?

## \*Sleep\*

(Mood, Memory & Metabolism)

- Go to bed and get up at same time daily (routine!) – **you NEED 8 hours!**
- 'Awake when light, asleep when dark'
- No screens for 1 hour prior to sleep
- No academic work for 1 hour before sleep
- 1 hour to wind down eg Quiet music/ bath/ hang out with friend
- No heavy food after 8pm
- Exercise in day time
- Don't 'pull all-nighters'

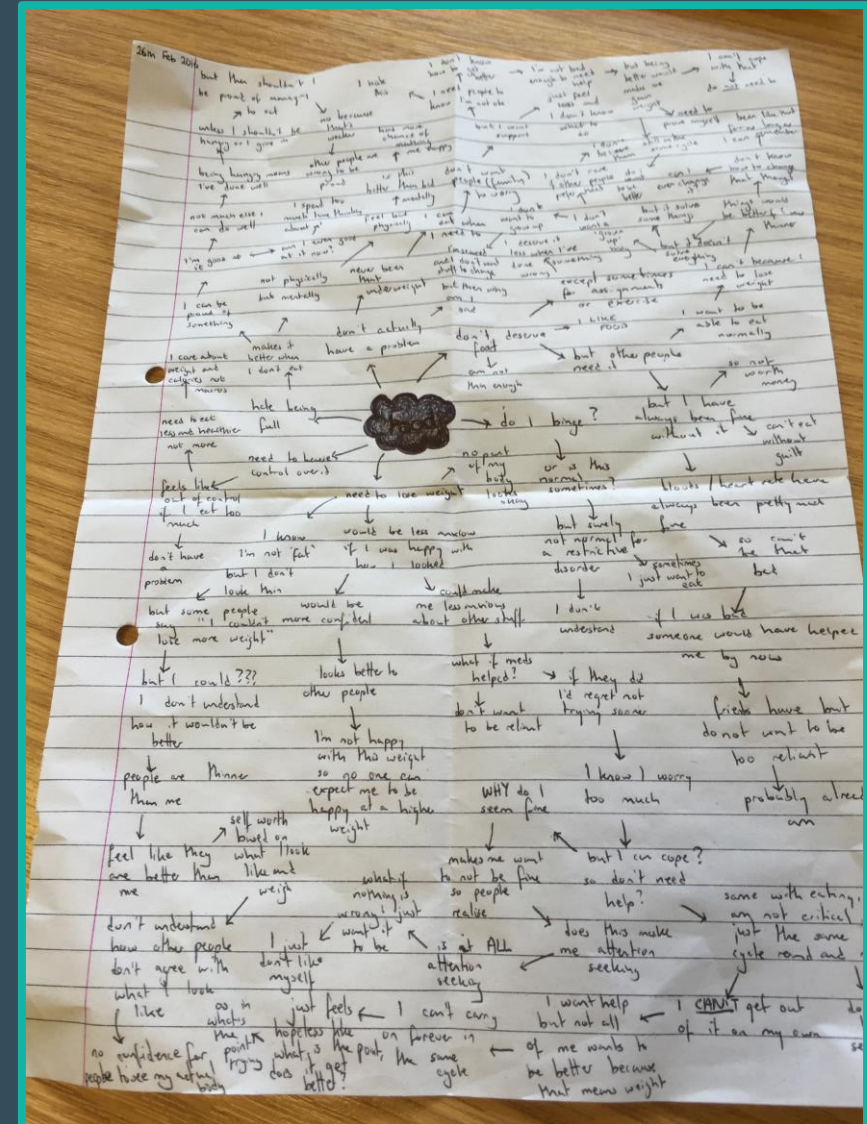






Evidence-based  
information on  
keeping well - 5  
ways to  
wellbeing

# Why some people don't ask for help...





# How to support a friend - 'Listen, believe, give hope'

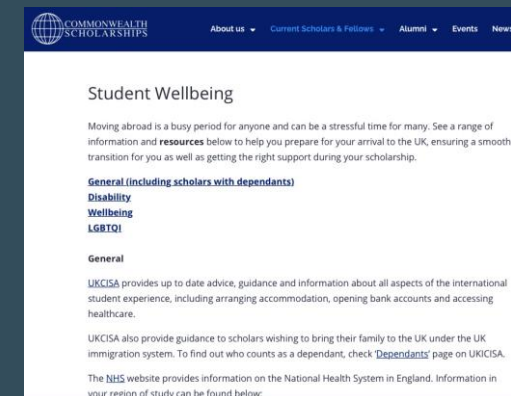
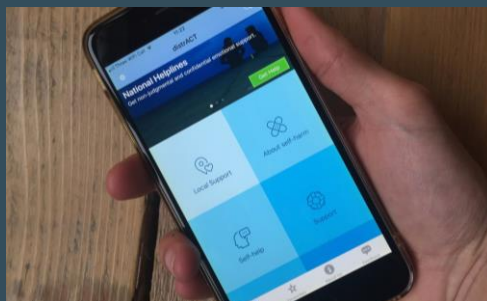
- **Listen** - you might be the first
  - Take it seriously (**believe**)
  - **Give Hope** - 'I think I can help you with this'
  - Normalise ('you're not alone')
- 
- It's not 'a phase'
  - Don't overreact - stay calm
  - Validate them - 'you matter'
  - Seek professional help if needed
  - You don't have to fix them





# Free Resources

- Commonwealth Student Wellbeing page
- [welfare@cscuk.org.uk](mailto:welfare@cscuk.org.uk)
- distrACT/ Student Health apps
- Student Minds website
- Samaritans tel: 116 123 or online/ text
- Shout 85258 text service
- GP/ Counselling/ Wellbeing teams
- NHS IAPT (psychology) services (free)
- Black Minds Matter
- StudentSpace.org.uk
- #DomIn60Seconds YouTube videos
- Greatbritishmag.co.uk





# Thank you!

## QUESTIONS?

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