BUILDING A RESILIENCE COURSE FOR STUDENTS: MOVING FROM SURVIVING TO THRIVING

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Padlet: https://padlet.com/airwin33/rxy9msh0nhf4qhvu

Post in the chat and / or ask a question at any point.

Feel free to mute or not engage if any topic is brought up that you would prefer not to discuss.

BEFORE WE BEGIN….

BUILDING THE COURSE

1

Understanding resilience

Reviewing the literature.

2

Building a framework

Developing the course structure and content.

3

Student insights

Focus groups with students.

4

Where we are now

Preliminary 5-week micro-credential course structure.

HOW DOES THE LITERATURE DEFINE RESILIENCE?

- *'a dynamic process of positive adaptation in the face of adversity or challenge. This process involves the capacity to negotiate for, and draw upon, psychological, social, cultural and environmental resources'* (Brewer et al., 2019).

- The ability to adapt when things go wrong.

- The ability to recover function in the face of losses (mental or physical).

- The heightened likelihood of success despite environmental adversity.

- A DYNAMIC PROCESS THAT CAN BE ENHANCED / DEVELOPED / TRAINED.

RESILIENCE CONCEPTS

Academic resilience

- Martin & Marsh 5-C model.
- Five factors that predict resilience: confidence, co-ordination, control, composure, commitment.
- Resilience results in improved self-esteem, heightened course enjoyment, enhanced engagement with materials.

Graduate attribute

- Resilience needed throughout undergraduate and postgraduate study to manage feedback and for self-motivation.
- Resilience required when entering labour market to deal with setbacks, negative decisions, persistence in applications.

Metacognition

- Knowledge of one's own cognitive processes.
- Self-regulation, monitoring own learning, reflection on performance.
- Academic resilience could be enhanced through meta-cognitive strategies (such as reflection).

Mental health and wellbeing

- Important for development of coping strategies (stress, anxiety).
- Managing adversity.
- Strategies to protect / support mental and physical wellbeing can enhance resilience.

PRELIMINARY RESILIENCE COURSE FRAMEWORK

Online, micro-credential, certificate awarded.

Knowledge

- Introduce concept of resilience and underlying factors.
- Discuss key metacognition strategies (planning, reflection, self-monitoring)
- Cover mental / physical health and wellbeing.
- Introduce topics of self-care, career planning, self-efficacy, social networks, work readiness, uncertainty, stress.

Plan your own journey

- Resilience planner – choose your own focus each week.
- Choice of activities linked to selected topic.
- Self-monitoring – chart progress, time commitment, satisfaction.

Interactive

- Discussion boards
- Networking activities

STUDENT FOCUS GROUPS

- Five focus groups (3-4 students per group)
- Mixed disciplines (Psychology, Law, Music etc.) and years (1-4).
- Practical Aims:
  - Gather initial reactions to proposed resilience course.
  - Get feedback on proposed course design, content and mechanisms.

STUDENT INSIGHTS

- Content
  - Like the idea of a resilience course (resilience important).
  - Important to cover physical and mental health.
  - Practical resilience strategies useful.
  - Should be a range of activities / strategies (multiple views).
  - Course could help destigmatise mental health issues.
  - Important to link to external resources / support.
  - Student generated content important.
- Approach
  - Importance of interaction.
  - Activities more engaging than lectures.
  - Podcasts more appealing than lectures.
  - In-person element may be required for certain aspects.
- Completion
  - Course certificate on completion may increase sign-up.

UPDATED COURSE FRAMEWORK

5-week, online, micro-credential, certificate awarded.

Content

- Week 1: What is resilience and why do I want it?
- Week 2: Adversity impacts everyone
- Week 3: Building resilience and coping with adversity
- Week 4: The importance of community and social connections
- Week 5: Reflection

Plan your own journey

- Resilience journal: Reflect on insights each week, note down activities tried and outcome, regular self-assessment, set own activities / plan for going forward beyond course.
- Choice of activities – self-care, physical wellbeing, social connections, self-management.

Interactive

- Connecting with peers: resilience walks, discussion boards.
- Peer insight: Student developed content, shared activities (e.g. coping strategies, experience with support).
- Engaging with staff: Live quizzes and Q&A sessions.

WHAT NOW?

- Course management forms
  - Learning outcomes
  - Staff requirements
  - Addition to curriculum
- Staff content
  - Not lectures!
  - Podcasts, TED style talks, testimonials
  - Guided activities / strategy development
- Student developed content
  - Multiple modalities
  - Shared experiences
- Resilience walks
  - Building community
  - Enabling social connections

PHASE 2: DEVELOPING RESILIENCE CONTENT

Student-Developed Content

What?

- Generate a bank of student-generated content relevant to the concept of resilience

Why?

- Impactful teaching practices
- Student voice
- Supporting mental health

How?

- Student content providers
- Activities for students
- Resilience-focused guidelines

Resilience Walks

What?

- Students form small groups; guided activity walking around local areas

Why?

- Value of in-person activities
- Value of social activities in nature for mental health

How?

- Plan walking routes and topics of focus
- Intervention-based assessment of the walks

STUDENT-DEVELOPED CONTENT

What?

- Generate a bank of student-generated content relevant to the concept of resilience
- In a variety of formats: podcasts, vlogs, blogs, testimonials, images

Why?

- Focus groups: Student-led content is more impactful and engaging
- Pedagogical research: Student-generated content is important for teaching effectiveness across a diverse student body (Nava et al., 2019)
- Resilience and mental health: The majority of students do not engage with standard support services and resources (ONS, 2018)
- Students see peers as sources of credible information relating to mental health (Lattie et al., 2020)

How?

- Led by our intern, Alice
- Recruitment of student content providers
- Generation of guidelines to ensure the content is relevant for resilience
- Provision of tasks or activities for students to engage with to generate peer-guidance
- Reflections on the impact of those activities on perceived resilience.

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RESILIENCE WALKS

What?

- Develop a series of resilience walks, where students form small groups and take part in a guided activity as they walk around local areas.

Why?

- Focus groups: Students are keen to engage with in-person activities

- Pedagogical research: Resilience can be facilitated through informal activities, such as outreach and community building activities (Holdsworth et al., 2017)

- Social aspects: Making friends and developing support networks is important to students when transitioning to university (Laidlaw et al., 2015)

- Mental health: Group walks in nature may play a role in 'un-doing' the effects off stressful life events (Marselle et al., 2019)

How?

- Led by our intern, Lea

- Plan walking routes and topics of focus

- Intervention-based assessment of the walks, rating wellbeing and resilience before and after walks (evaluation)

RESILIENCE WALKS

- 5 walks

- 20 minutes - 1 hour

- Live walks **+** *"Podcasts"*, i.e., Recorded Walks

- Location ← → Topic

  - *Campus Walk –* **Discovering Resilience**

  - *Park Walk –* **Experiencing the Present Moment**

  - *Beach Walk –* **Taking control vs. Giving away Control**

 - *Garden Walk –* **Exploring**

  - *City walk –* **Connecting**

EXAMPLE – CITY WALK

"CONNECT"

40/50 min, 2,7/3 km
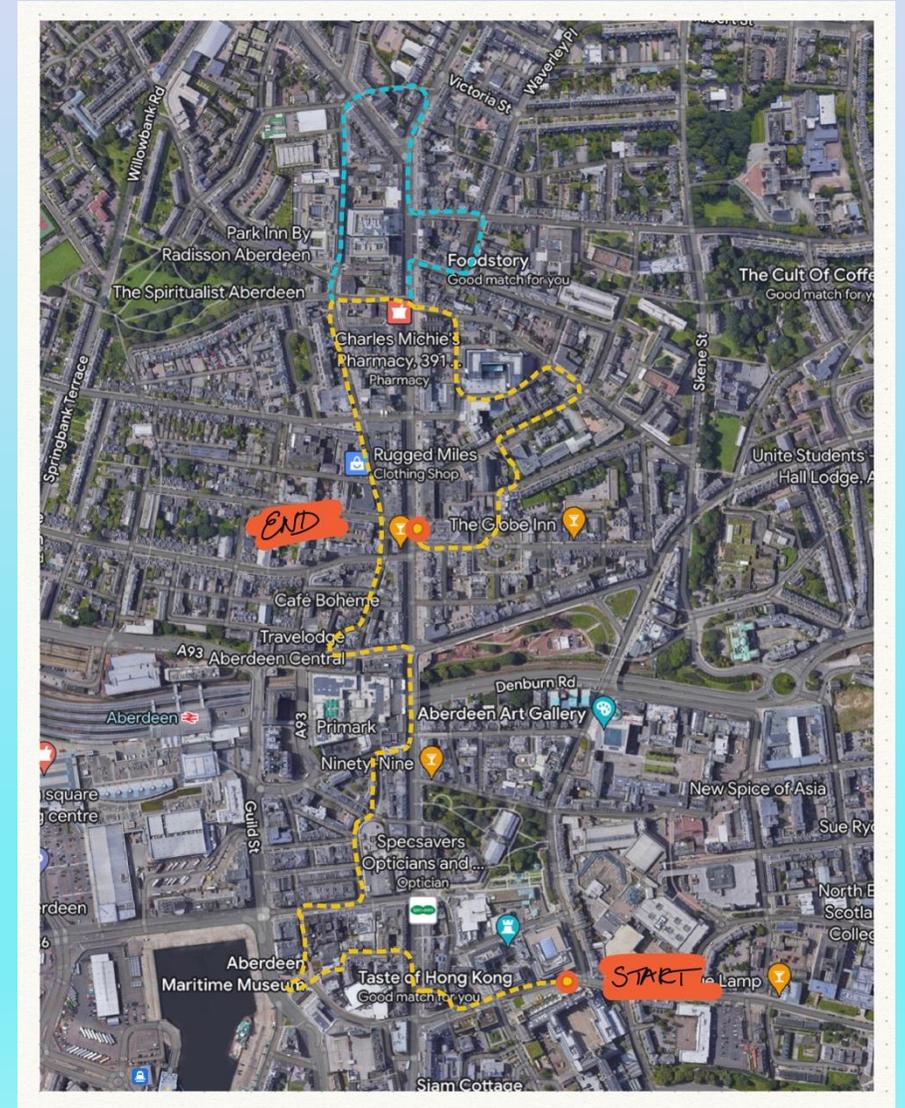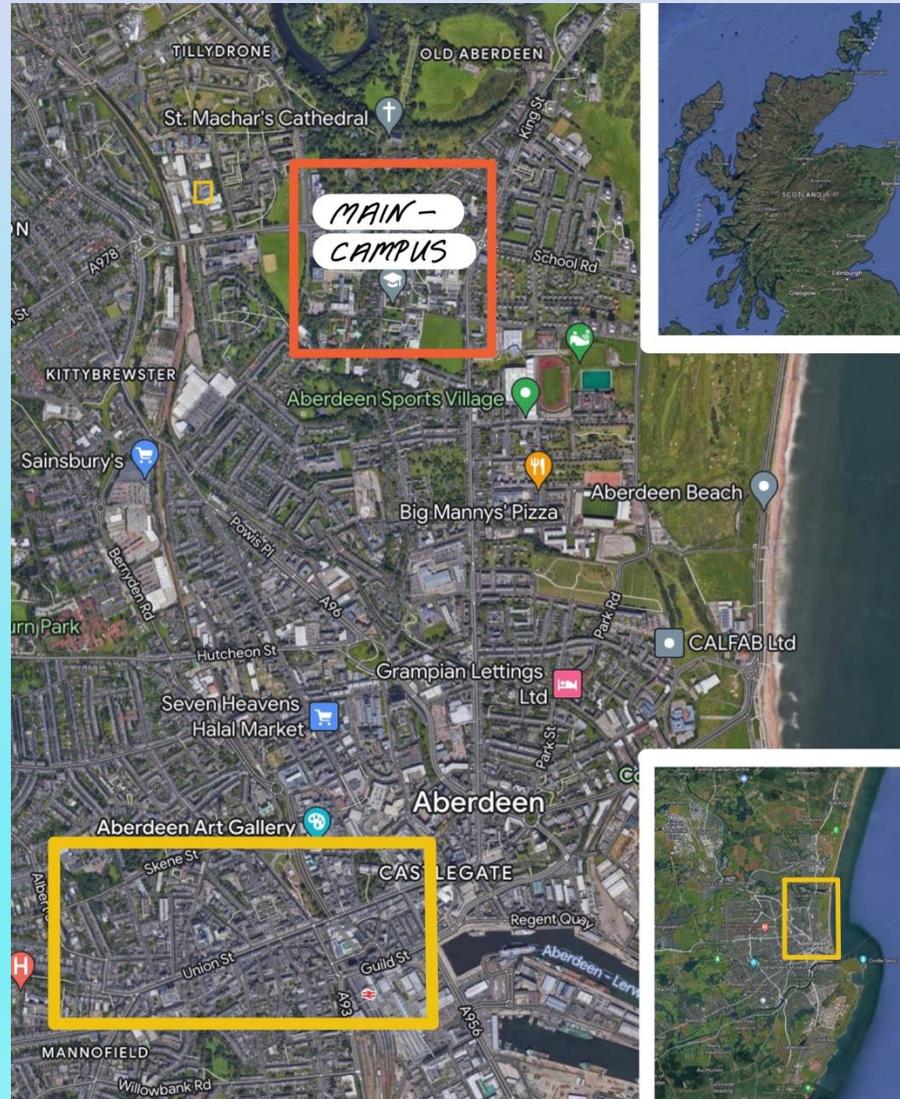
RESILIENCE WALKS – WHAT'S NEXT?

1) Work out the exact course of the walks.

2) Begin trial walks.

3) *(Work out Recorded Walks/"Podcasts")*
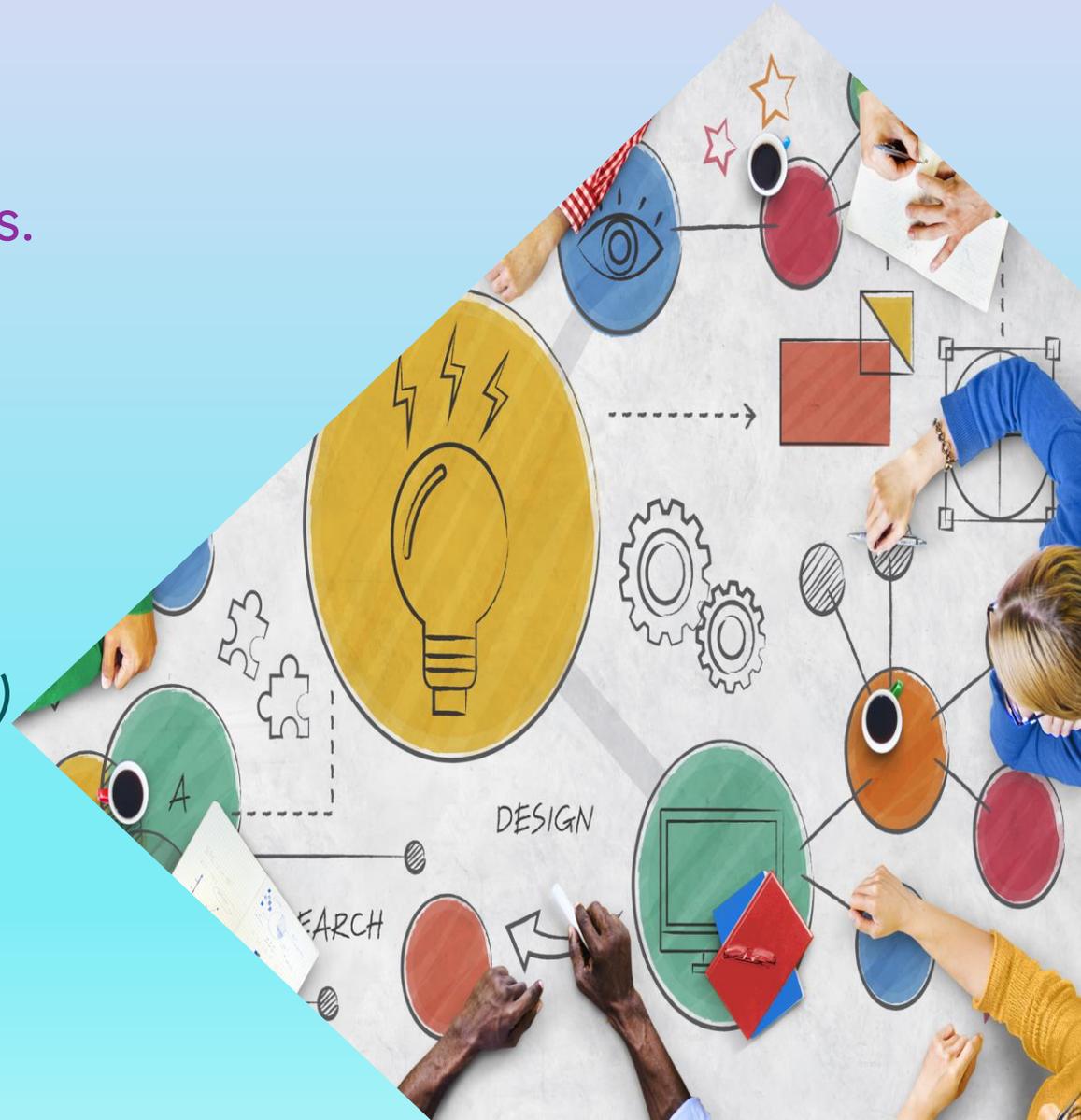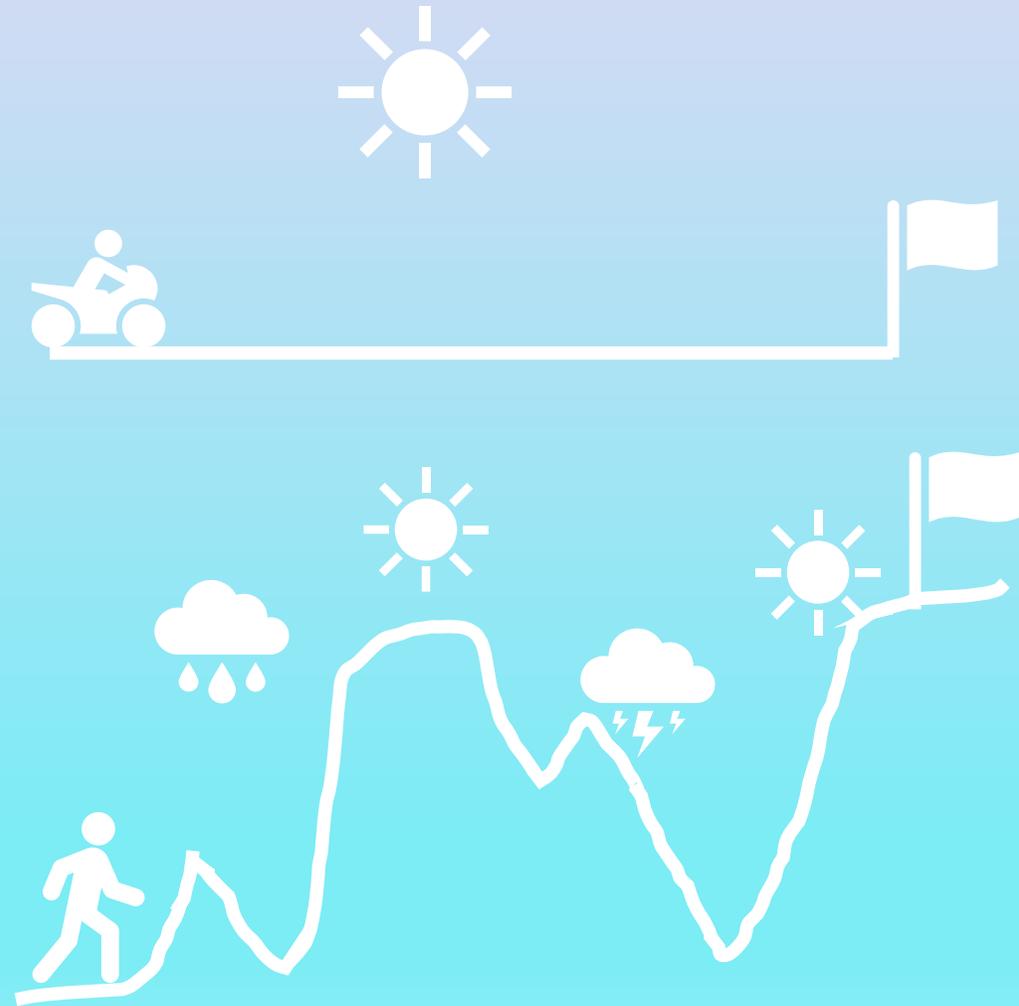
RESILIENCE – LINKS TO MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

1

Understanding resilience

Being prepared for challenges, understanding that skills can be developed and having realistic expectations all build resilience and improve coping.

2

The value of social support

Social support builds resilience and helps to manage stress.

Support can include friends & family, University, work, 3rd sector organisations …

3

The need for action!

Research highlights difficulties many students experience accessing support for their mental health and wellbeing needs.

4

Value of peer support, student-generated content and voices

Trusted voices (talking about their own experiences) help with engagement and inclusivity.

THANK-YOU!

If you have any further questions or would like more info contact: a.irwin@abdn.ac.uk