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Effective Learning and Study Skills

SCI Academic skills, Fall 2020

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Materials by Hannu Pesonen & Aalto Psychologists' Team

Terminology*

- **Self-management****
=Management of studies?
The role of study skills
- **Focusing Energy**
 - Emphasis on our energy levels and wellbeing
 - "Manage your energy, not your time"



Talk in groups: (7 min)

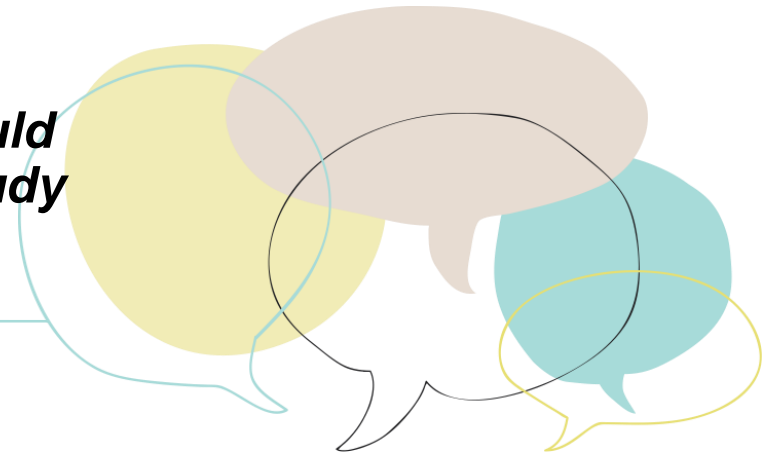
Give your answers through chat

What kind of study skills are important at university?

How are studies at Aalto different from your previous studies?

- *What you have noticed so far?*

And: Think of at least one tip that you could give to your fellow students regarding study skills



Factors most important in academic performance*

1. Students prior knowledge, academic performance and self-efficacy
2. **Motivation to be or become successful**
3. Emotion regulation skills
4. Skills to regulate learning technique
5. **Skills regarding *time management* and being productive (And handling procrastination)**



Other factors in academic performance

- **Student engagement***, *a regular term and research topic : different factors that combine to render studying meaningful, pleasant and fruitful*
[Blog post](#) & [Video](#)
- Of the 5 personality traits, conscientiousness has been found to correlate with academic performance
 - Including *Orderliness* and *achievement striving***
 - **Orderliness**, e.g. at work or in studies is also a skill



What is your approach to learning?

Deep approach

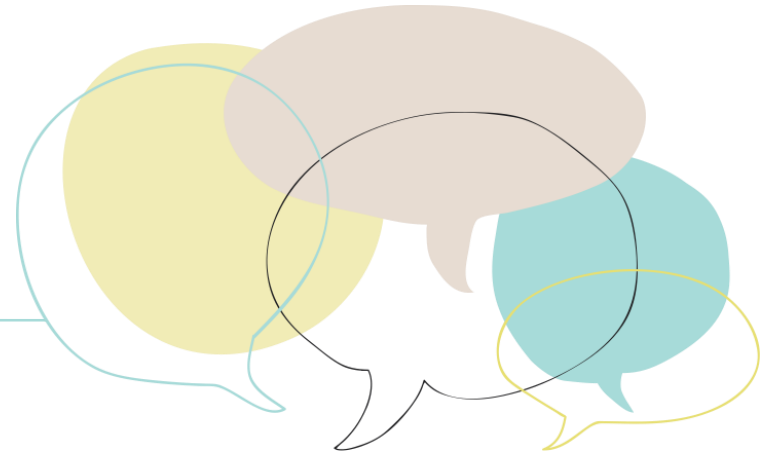
- Looking for deeper understanding
- Relating new ideas to previous knowledge

Surface approach

- Memorizing and repeating information
- Often motivated by fear of failure

Systematic approach

- Awareness of criteria
- Planning, time management



What are your expectations of success in your studies?

Optimistic

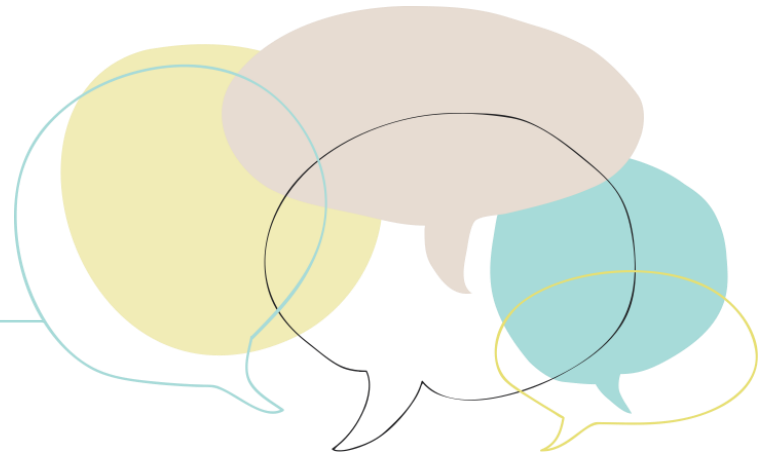
- High outcome expectations and positive past experiences
- Straightforward striving

Defensive pessimistic

- Defensively low expectations
- Motivated and successful but stressed

Self-handicapping

- Fear of failure, concentrate on task-irrelevant behaviour in order to create an excuse for it
- Academic underachievement

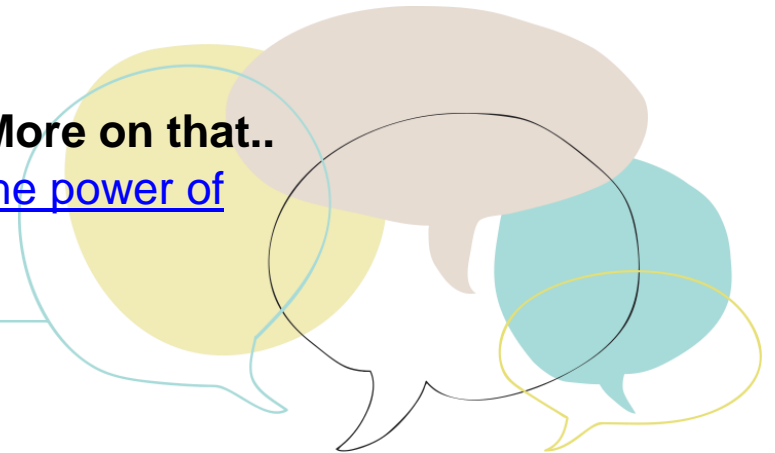


Emotions in learning

- Interest, enthusiasm, curiosity and joy are resources for learning
- Fear of failure, shame and embarrassment and anxiety* prevent learning

How do you deal with disappointments?

- Understanding failures as part of learning and showing kindness towards oneself -> motivation to learn, courage to take on challenges
- Hard self-criticism -> fear of failure
- Disappointment regarding the pandemic? More on that..
- Learn about <http://self-compassion.org/> and [the power of imperfection](#) (in Finnish)



Learning together

- **Building knowledge is a shared process**
 - Being part of the academic community
 - Zone of proximal development
 - Group work skills
- **Teaching others is an effective way to learn**
- **Social support is related to success in studies**



Learning together during the pandemic

- **Relatedness as one of our basic psychological needs (Deci & Ryan, 2008)**
 - It includes the need to feel belongingness
- **Social and peer support are important also during the pandemic*!**
- **We should give time to get to know if there are fewer chances for it**
- **Routines and compassion!**



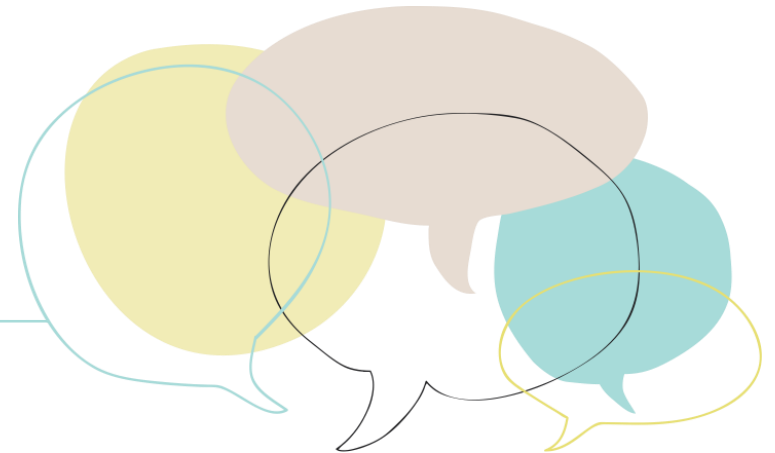
The role of motivation while studying during the pandemic?

- **Enthusiasm and curiosity are a sign that you enjoy studying and learning which can be crucial for long-term motivation**
 - **Motivation can still be made up of different kinds of it, depending on the topics and the situation**
 - **Sometimes, the topics themselves are engrossing*, other times we only do something because we have to****
 - **It is OK to feel bored, frustrated, even upset or lost – especially during these times. However, it is good to keep track of where we are headed*****



Question:

- **What has helped you to stay upbeat and motivated during the pandemic?**
 - Useful tips & ideas?
 - You can share your ideas in the chat
 - Let's use about 5 min on this question



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Time management – essential part of effective learning

Self-management – an umbrella term

- **Setting goals**
- **Focusing your energy**
 - *Prioritizing*
- **Time management**
- **Keeping up your energy**
 - *What gives you physical and mental energy*
- **An Underlying factor:**
 - *A good combo of motivation & meaning*

TASKS IN CALENDER
1 Month

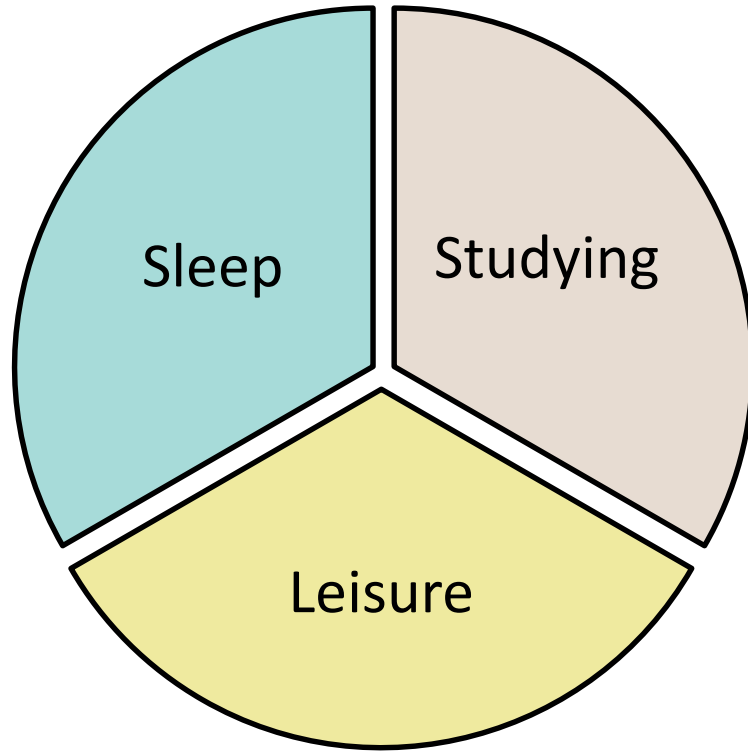
April 2022

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	
WEEK 1		Käsikirjoitus	1	2	3	4	5	6
WEEK 2	Tekniikka ja kuvauspaikka?	8	9	10	11	12	13	
WEEK 3	14	15	16	17	18	Treenit ja kuvaus	20	
WEEK 4	Editointi.	21	22	23	24	25	26	27
WEEK 5	28	29	ESITYS ³⁰					

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Time management for your wellbeing

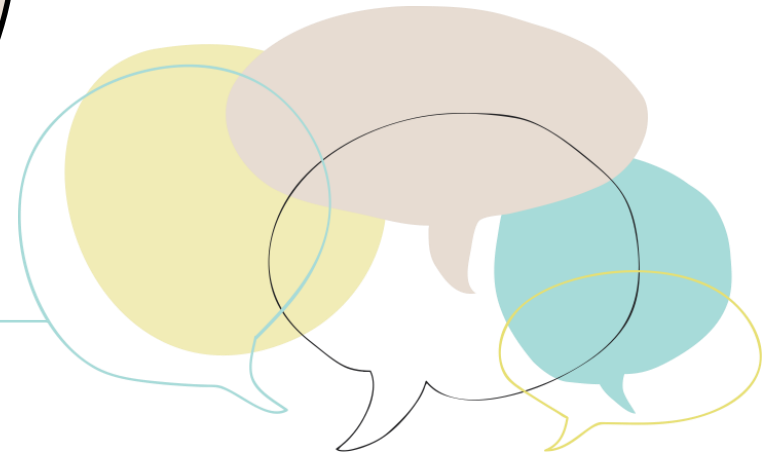


$$8h + 8h + 8h = 24h$$

1 credit = 27h of work

60 credits = 1600 h

1 study year = 35 weeks =
45 h/ week



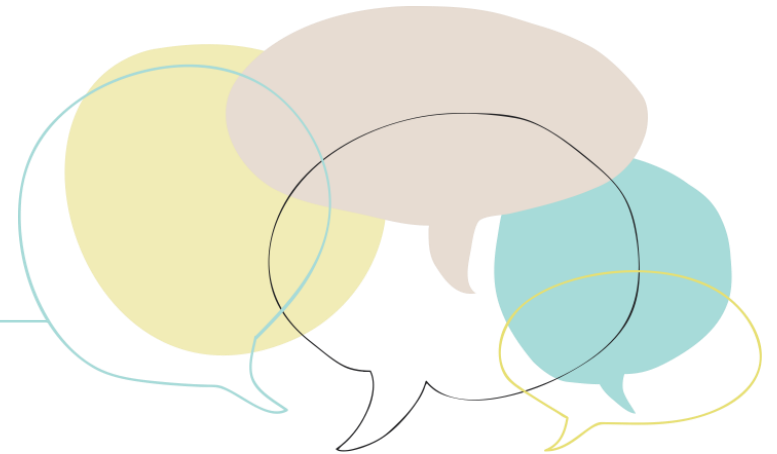
Do you spend your time meaningfully?

- **Things that cause stress**
 - **Unfinished tasks that we take responsibility of**
 - **Too many commitments**
 - **Wasting time on unimportant tasks**
- **What do you prioritize?**



On Time Management...

Rocks, Pebbles and Sand Story - Time Management (Work/Life Balance)



Time management

	Urgent	Not urgent
Important	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Crisis• Fire fighting• Pressing problems• Deadline-driven projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Planning• Preparation• Relationship building• Personal development• True recreation
Not important	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Interruptions• Some e-mails or phone calls	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Time wasters• Escape activities• Some e-mails or phone calls

Time to Get Cracking' – Self-study material on time management*

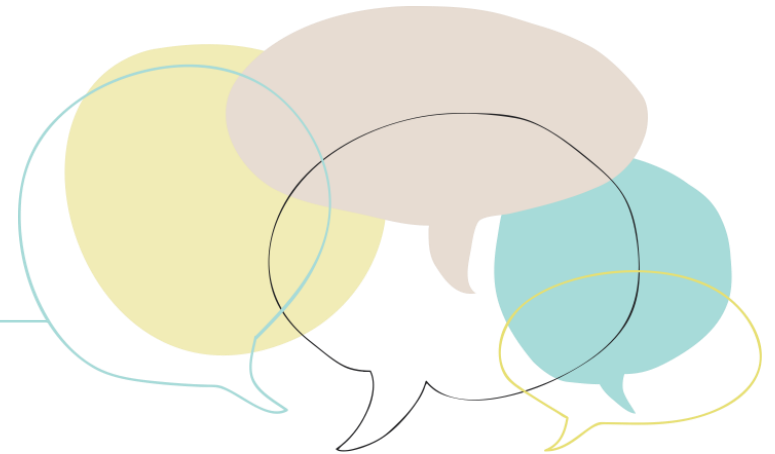
<https://mycourses.aalto.fi/course/view.php?id=22681>



What are you committed to do?

Think to yourself and write down: What kinds of commitments do you have at the moment? E.g.

- Studying, study tasks
- Working
- Hobbies and leisure time
- Relationships
- Health and wellbeing
- Daily tasks, house work



Focusing your energy

Have a look at your schedule for this week:

- Do you have clear priorities?
- Are there some time wasters?
- Do you try to multitask?

Clarify priorities if needed:

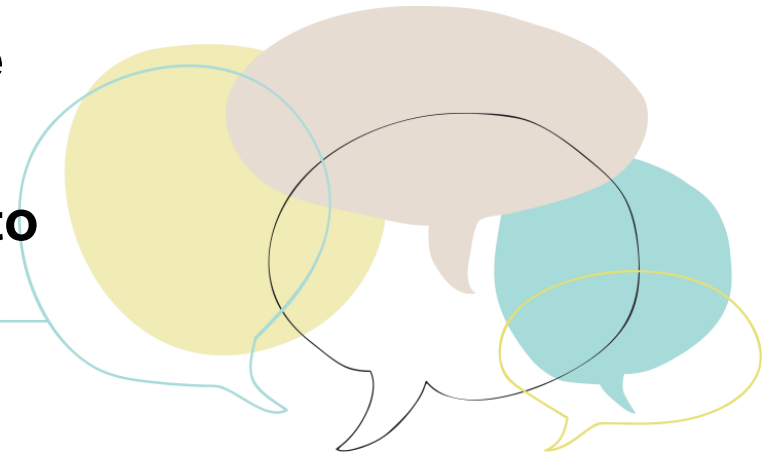
- A. Very important tasks
- B. Have to do but not so important
- C. Do if you have time



How to prioritize?

Divide your commitments to 3 categories:

- **Category A: most important things**
 - Max 4-6 tasks
 - Allocate a lot of energy and time for these tasks
- **Category B: Daily routines and interesting, but less important tasks**
 - Less time and energy for these
- **Category C: everything else**
 - Do these, if you have the time to



WEEK PLAN		MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN	
GOAL	TASKS	MOST IMPORTANT TASKS OF THE DAY							
1) Define your goals for the upcoming week!									
		4) Divide your tasks by days, max 3 major tasks / day							
		3) Split your goals into tasks	8	8	8	8	8	8	8
			9	9	9	9	9	9	9
			10	10	10	10	10	10	10
			11	11	11	11	11	11	11
			12	12	12	12	12	12	12
			13	13	13	13	13	13	13
		14	14	14	14	14	14	14	
		15	15	15	15	15	15	15	
		16	16	16	16	16	16	16	
		17	17	17	17	17	17	17	
2) Don't forget about your wellbeing!		18	18	18	18	18	18	18	
		Evening	Evening	Evening	Evening	Evening	Evening	Evening	
		5) Schedule it in! Remember to leave space for recovery and free time!							



Concretize the tasks into goals

- **What do I need to do to reach my goal?**
 - **If your goal is to pass an examination, you can define the subtasks**
 - **E.g. “Read the material”, “Make notes while reading”, “Complete the assignments A, B and C”**
- **Note down your subtasks into a calendar, agenda or weekplan**
 - **Keep a “To do”-list of the less important or less time-bound subtasks**



What's a good goal?

Set SMART goals:

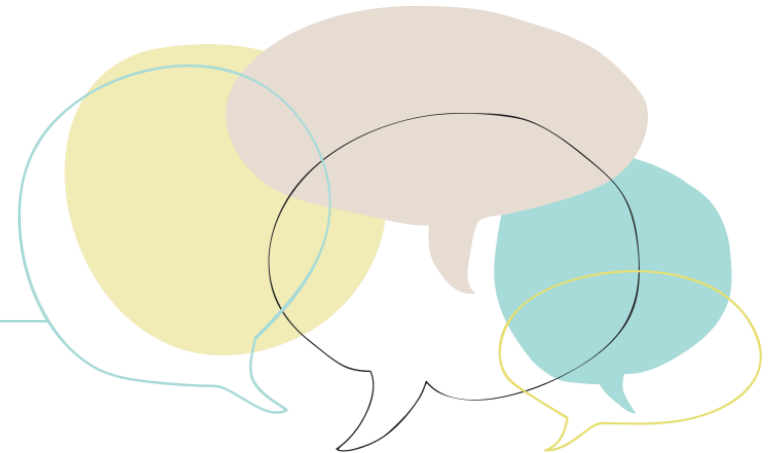
Specific

Measurable

Attainable

Relevant

Time-bound



Save space in your memory

- **Writing down the things you need to do later keeps them from rolling around in your working memory and disturbing your task at hand**
- **Remember to check your “To do”-list regularly**
 - **Can you do it right now? Do you need to do it at all?**
 - **Do right now the tasks that take less than 2 minutes to complete**
 - **Longer tasks: decide when you will do it and mark it down in your calendar / weekplan**



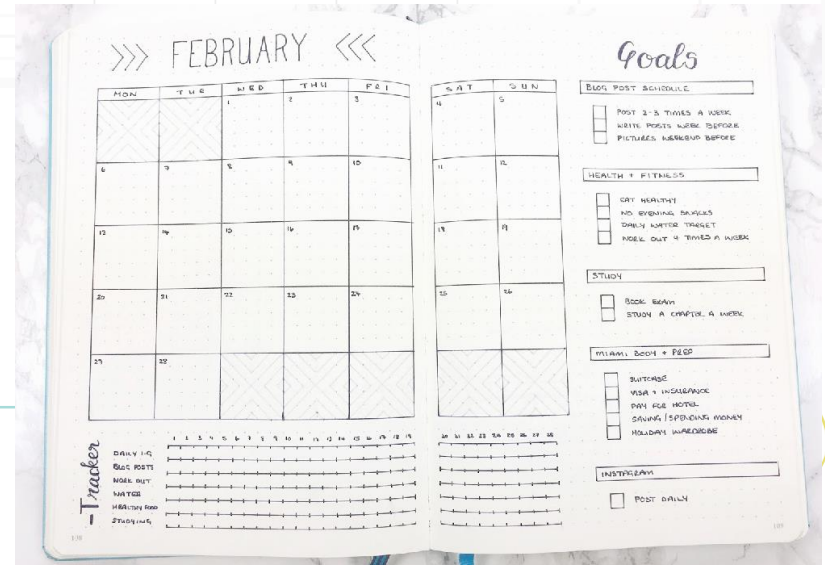
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			9	9	9	9	9	9	9
			10	10	10	10	10	10	10
			11	11	11	11	11	11	11
			12	12	12	12	12	12	12
			13	13	13	13	13	13	13
		14	14	14	14	14	14	14	
		15	15	15	15	15	15	15	
		16	16	16	16	16	16	16	
		17	17	17	17	17	17	17	
2) Don't forget about your wellbeing!		18	18	18	18	18	18	18	
		Evening	Evening	Evening	Evening	Evening	Evening	Evening	
		5) Schedule it in! Remember to leave space for recovery and free time!							

Time management to practice

- Start using a calendar of your preference (electronic or paper)
- Include task prioritizing and To do-lists
- Remember to make time slots for your independent study, project works and other self scheduled work

WEEK 1 30 Oct - 5 Nov, 2016 Today Week Month

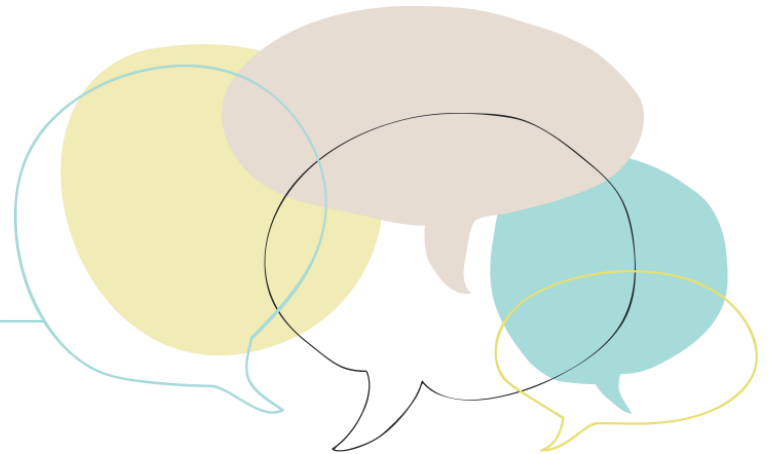
Sun 10/30	Mon 10/31	Tue 11/1	Wed 11/2	Thu 11/3	Fri 11/4	Sat 11/5
Autumn Half Term	Computing 09:00 - 10:30 Computing 1, Building A2	English 09:00 - 10:30 English 7a, Main Block	Computing 09:00 - 10:30 Computing 1, Building A2		Maths: Mechanics 09:00 - 10:30 Mathematics 3, Maths A	
	English 10:45 - 12:15 English 7a, Main Block		Physics 10:45 - 12:15 Physics 2, Sciences A	Maths: Mechanics 10:45 - 12:15 Mathematics 3, Maths A	Computing 10:45 - 12:15 Computing 1, Building A2	
	Computing 13:05 - 14:35 Computing 1, Building A2	Physics 13:05 - 14:35 Physics 2, Sciences A	Electronics 13:05 - 14:35 Electronics 3, Sciences A	Electronics 13:05 - 14:35 Electronics 3, Sciences A	English 10:45 - 12:15 English 7a, Main Block	
	Electronics 14:45 - 16:15 Electronics 3, Sciences A	Maths: Mechanics 14:45 - 16:15 Mathematics 3, Maths A		Physics 14:45 - 16:15 Physics 2, Sciences A		



Procrastination

Getting the stuff done?

("Procrastination" Tales Of Mere Existence)



Procrastinating often?

Situations which induce procrastination:

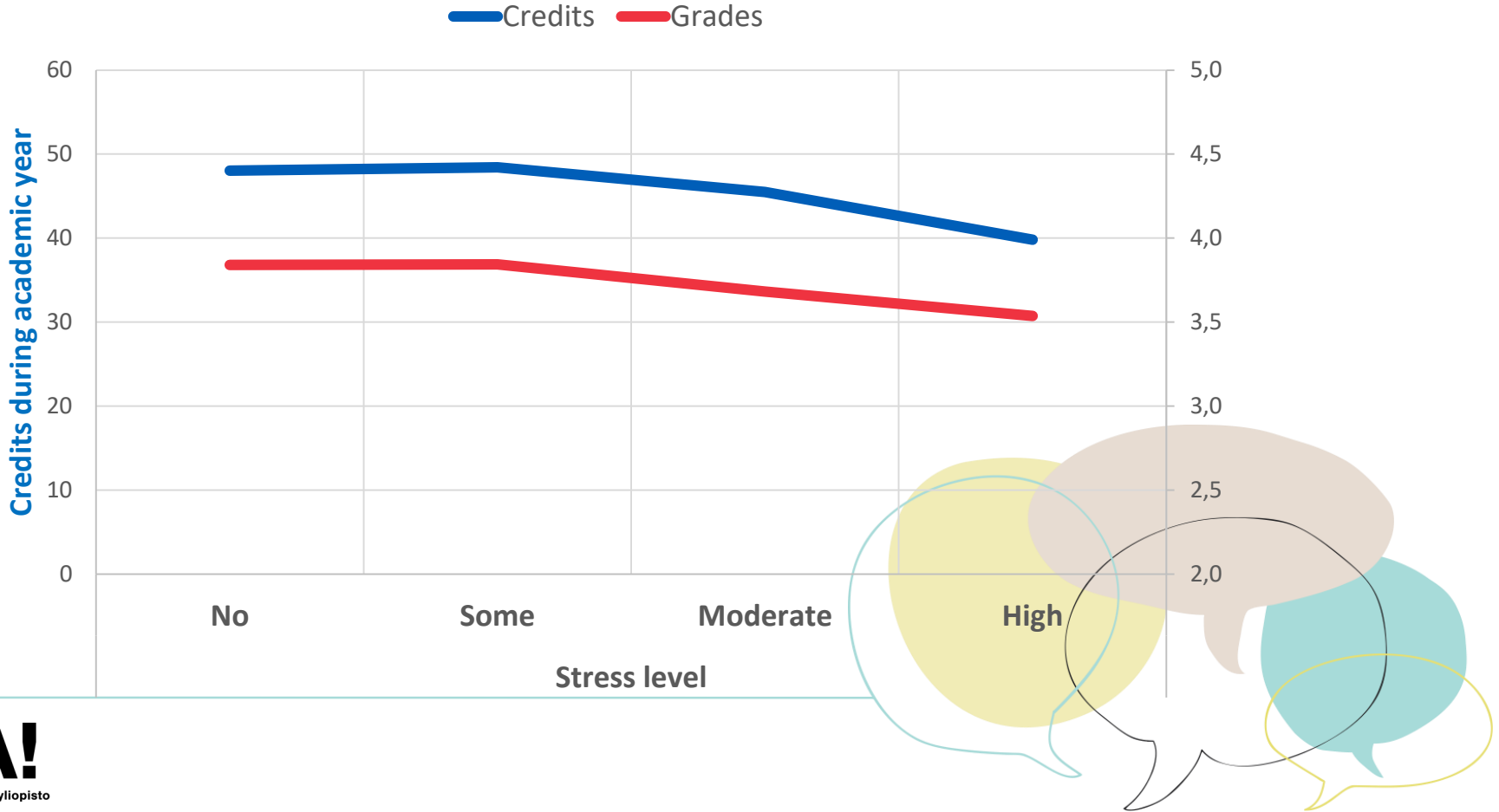
- **Task seems (too) difficult**
- **Task requires a lot of time**
- **Lack of knowledge or skills needed for the task**

There might be deeper reasons behind procrastination:

- **Fear of failure**
- **Lack of confidence**
- **Self-criticism**



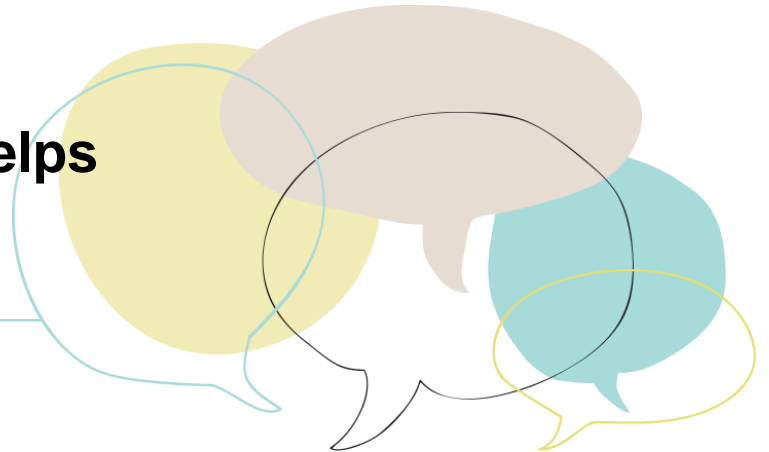
AllWell?2018 : Stress Level and Performance



How to recover from stress?

Four elements of psychological recovery:

- Psychological detachment from studies/work
 - Relaxation
 - Mastery of a skill, learning new things
 - Control during off-studies time
- Discuss with other student, what helps you to recover from stress (2min)



Study skills

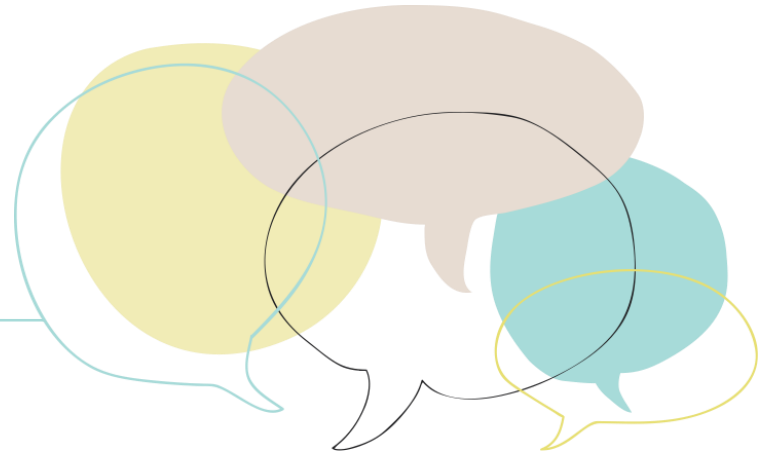
Information on [study skills](#)

Diverse learners – click [here](#):

Test your [learning style](#):

[“Manage your energy, not your time” article](#)

[D. Allen - Getting things done*](#) - **Time management** [video](#)



The Psychology Service at Aalto University

Counselling and support for learning, motivation, self-regulation, study skills, coping with stress and career choice.

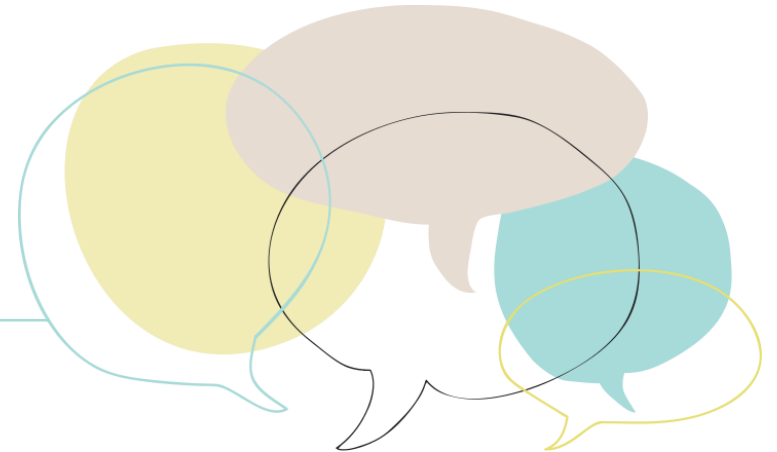
You can contact us by e-mail opintopsykologi@aalto.fi.
If you are booking an appointment, please see [INTO](#)

Career coaching is psychological counselling, which gives careers support and employability support. The focus of career counselling is generally on issues such as career exploration, personal career development and other career-related challenges. You can contact career counselling psychologist by e-mail careercounselling@aalto.fi.



Starting Point of Wellbeing

- Advice and guidance on services related to wellbeing
 - Due to the Coronavirus outbreak, the service will be offered via Zoom.
 - We will notify when the service starts on [Into!](#)
 - See Into for more info e.g. on Aalto chaplains and UniSport





Thank you!