

A T I M E T O T H R I V I N G

Successful Student Transitions

Fundamentals for Well-being
Dynamics for THRIVING
through change

Episode 21 Introduction

Welcome to Successful Student Transitions – A Time to Thrive

This podcast series is for you if you are:

- A student leaving full-time education and moving into the world of work.
- A student moving to university or some form of higher education.
- An educator, parent or counsellor supporting students as they take the next steps in their journey from school/college/sixth form into the world of further education or work.

For many students this represents the first big life transition. It can be an exciting and challenging time.

This podcast series provides strategies to develop self-awareness, understanding and the ability to thrive through times of transition.

This episode is part of Series Three: Fundamentals for Well-being – Dynamics for thriving through change and transition

This is the full transcript with links to associated episodes.

You can also access the show notes, resources and worksheets mentioned in the podcast by registering [HERE](#).

About Your Hosts

Elizabeth Gillies

Elizabeth is an Education Psychologist based in London who has worked in schools as a psychologist at the individual, group and systems level for over 30 years.

She has been fortunate to live, work and raise her family in America, Japan, and Australia so, unsurprisingly, she is interested in the challenges and opportunities of transitions.

Elizabeth is a CBT (Cognitive Behaviour Therapy) and ACT (Acceptance and Commitment Therapy) specialist. She works in schools, on-line and, near her home base in South London, incorporating walking with talking therapy in green spaces.



At the crunch points at the beginning and end of the school year, Elizabeth runs workshops for young people, teachers, and parents to help them understand common patterns of transition and how to use this knowledge to help themselves during this time and future changes.

Together with a great group of professionals in London, Elizabeth is growing a multi professional support service called Special Networks and can be found [HERE](#)

Elizabeth is a member of FIGT (Families in Global Transition) and with Louise and another FIGT member, is a co-chair of the FIGT UK affiliate. Link to FIGT. Connect via LinkedIn [HERE](#)

About Louise Wiles

Louise Wiles is a well-being, change and transition consultant, trainer and coach and the parent of two teens.

Alarmed by the recent explosion of well-being challenges amongst children and teens, especially during exam years and through times of change and transition. Louise believes we should be better preparing young people for life beyond school and university so that they can thrive through the natural highs and lows of life.



Louise combines her professional background in organisational psychology (MSc) and coaching, with her expertise as a wellbeing, positive change and strengths practitioner and her personal experience of life on the move, to develop training courses and coaching programmes that help her clients prepare for, and thrive, through the challenge of change and transition.

You can connect with Louise on LinkedIn [HERE](#)

Website [HERE](#) and contact Louise [HERE](#)

Louise is also the author of ***Thriving Abroad: The Definitive Guide to Professional and Personal Relocation Success***

Transcript

Introduction

"I know when challenges come to us, often it's a time that, I learned from a friend, it's a time to step up. We can deal with everything that's coming, but some kind of bigger change, or transition or when something happens in life it's that time we're going to move into another gear. So, we're kind of saying, right, this is another gear, this is a time to step up. This is a time to look after yourself really intentionally and look at the things that are working round about you." Elizabeth Gillies

You're facing a big life change, moving to university, a year abroad, a work placement or out into the world of work. Times of change like these can be both exciting and challenging. Our aim is to support you as you step up and find your new gear. We will show you what it takes to thrive in times of change and transition.

Using the latest from research in this field we will be suggesting ideas from evidence-based practice to help you enhance your well-being. Our mission - to help you settle well and thrive in this next stage of your life.

Louise Wiles 1:37

Hello, and welcome to Series Three of the Successful Student Transitions podcast. Now in this series, we're going to be investigating the Fundamentals for wellbeing: Dynamics for Thriving Through Times of Change. And in this episode Elizabeth and I will explain a little about the fundamentals for well-being and provide an outline of content that is going to follow in the upcoming episodes. So, who is this series for? Well, this is for you, if you're moving from school to a new school or college, if you're moving from school, or college, to university, or to a year abroad or into the world of work. Perhaps you're an educator, a well-being specialists, a parent who's supporting young people through these transitions, you will also find this content helpful too. All of these moves represent a big change, and you may be moving from full time care at home to independent living, from an environment where you feel a strong sense of belonging to somewhere where initially, you don't yet have that strong sense of belonging. And you may also be experiencing multiple changes all at once, you're changing your study status, you're perhaps starting a new job, you're leaving home, you're making new friends, you're settling into a new environment, new home, and perhaps you're adding to that an international move too. So, all of these changes are happening at the same time and add to some of the challenges of the experience.

Elizabeth Gillies 03:09

So, these are big changes in this next life, part of your chapter and instalments. So, you know, it's natural that you're going to be looking for new opportunities. There are new beginnings, there's time to grow both personally and professionally. And you'll have hopes and aspirations. And when we've talked about transition before, we've talked about it being an exciting time, but also a bit of a daunting time too and that's part and parcel of transition. So, there'll be things you'll know in terms of how to do the things that you've done before when you've made good transitions, but they'll also be new things and new challenges to come into your sphere.

And we know from the research into well-being, how people thrive happens in a whole range of ways, developing strategies and approaches. And you'll have your own kind of unique way of doing it, to be able to thrive and to have your best life. And we want you to, if you haven't listened already, episodes 11 to 15, we interviewed five young people, Rafi, Ben, Maia, Toby and Naomi, who were all at different stages of their university or post university experience. And we asked them to share the challenges that they'd face and what they've learned, so it might be good to go back and have a listen because they've got great insights and advice. And it's always really powerful to learn from those that have gone before you. And what we saw from those conversations, that overall well-being depends on a whole range of factors. They talked about practical, social, emotional, organisational, and learning related challenges. And many made recommendations about how they coped with those challenges as you make these moves. So, as you know, and as we've shared, change always comes with a mix of highs and lows. And this is generally true in life, isn't it? It would be great if we could all build our ability to cope with the ups and downs and still feel good and able to function well. And that's actually a kind of definition that Louise and I are going to share with you that, from Professor Felicia Huppert, that *'well-being is our ability to feel good and function effectively as we navigate the natural highs and lows of life.'*

Louise Wiles 05:44

And so, this is going to be the focus of this next series, the Fundamentals for Well-being. And lots has been written in recent years about the rising mental health challenges amongst young people. Something that the pandemic has really not helped at all. We've heard about heightened levels of stress, anxiety, depression. Now we hope that this isn't the case for you. However, if you're listening and really struggling with these kinds of things, and conditions, then we really suggest that you reach out and speak to someone. Universities often offer well-being services, so we really implore that you go and talk to someone there or talk to your GP, your parents, friends, and seek some help and support. And in thinking about asking for help, we suggest you listen to Episode Six, which is all about that, just that, asking for help. Because this new podcast series is not about directly dealing with anxiety or depression, or high levels of stress. It's kind of flipping the whole situation on the head and saying, Well, what does it take to be well, and to live a life full of well-being? And we're looking to understand that from a holistic perspective. So, in that sense, we're going to be talking about what we mean by well-being, recognising that it's a variable concept. And that's a really important point to underline right now, it's normal for our levels of well-being to change day to day. So, we're never going to suggest to you that there should be a level of well-being you should be aiming for or achieving. That's something that's personal to you. And we're going to be encouraging you to identify what your well-being point is, and what contributes to that, it's different for everybody.

And so, the suggestions for how you can enhance your personal well-being in a number of areas of your life is what we're going to be focusing on over the next coming weeks and months. And it's really important to hold on to what you know, to be true about yourself, in the sense of who you are, and to be authentic to that, and trust that you can learn to understand what works best for you.

Elizabeth Gillies 08:02

So, over this series, we're going to introduce you to different elements and themes that influence our well-being, you can choose which ones resonate with you and create your own kind of personal recipe,

or your own flavour of well-being. And we put in the title of our podcast, that word dynamic, because it's not just one thing that's going to work, it's about how it will relate to other things. You know, sleeps going to give you energy to be organised and go and meet people. And, you know, so it's not they're working on their own, they're working, you know, in a dynamic way. And we want you to also be thinking about how you do this intentionally, you likely have been doing things before that have worked well for you. And this time of change, is to kind of start to reset and refocus things that you're doing, because there will be more challenges. So that's another word we want to kind of really focus on, is intentionality. And, of course, this isn't going to be your only change in life, there are going to be many. So, we kind of really firmly believe that it makes sense to take time to do this change well, to learn and grow through it, acquire skills and strategies that can support you through the many life changes and periods of transition that are yet to come.

Louise Wiles 09:34

Yes, and on that note, there's a great book written by a guy called Bruce Feiler, called 'Life is in the transitions', you might like to look it up and read it. It's full of stories of people's lives, and the transitions they've gone through in their lives. And so, as the title of the book suggests, 'life is in the transitions', we live through transition most of our lives, something's changing in our life, at most points in our lives. So, thinking about this transition, and thinking about it intentionally and learning about yourself and how you react to change and transition will be really helpful as a learning point for life really, and how you cope with all that life is going to provide, throw evolve into for you.

Elizabeth Gillies 10:24

Yeah, and on that point, I was just gonna say something else there Louise. I know when challenges come to us, often it's a time that, I learned from a friend, it's a time to step up. We can kind of, we deal with everything that's coming, but some kind of bigger change, or transition or something happens in life, it's a time we're going to move into another gear. So, we're kind of saying, right, this is another gear, this is a time to step up. This is a time to look after yourself really intentionally, and look at the things that are working round about you. And Louise and I are going to present you with a metaphor that actually started off as a stress metaphor, but we're turning it into a well-being metaphor. And so, the image that we want you to create in your mind is of this bucket with a handle and a tap that can fill the bucket. And unfortunately, the bucket has got holes. So, within your bucket, you have this capacity to deal with things. That's the fluid that is the liquid in the bucket. And especially at times of change, there will be holes or drains or leaks, whatever you want to call it, in that bucket. So, you know, when we're thinking about the things that we've talked about, it might be leaving home, it might be having to meet new friends, it might be thinking about, 'Oh, I have to meet new people', you know, thoughts, like, 'Is this course one that I'm going to be able to do?'. So those drains will be in there in your bucket, there will be always some challenges and stresses for you. However, we know that there's a tap going into the bucket, that's going to fill your bucket, so that your buckets not going to be empty, or even kind of just a little bit at the bottom, kind of almost empty. And those fillers we're going to talk about is the fundamentals. And it could be things like exercise, playing sports, having a hobby, making contact with friends, keeping in communication, having a really good relaxation time before bed. So, we're going to be thinking about how you're going to use this well-being bucket. We're going to have a session next about that and about making sure that you've got an understanding about what are the stresses and

strains for you that are your leaks, and where you've got the ability to fill your bucket from the top. So, a little kind of well, well-being bucket rather than a stress bucket, Louise.

Louise Wiles 13:13

Yeah, I like that. I love that flip, actually. And I think it's really important also to remember that our bucket isn't just sitting in isolation, we don't sit in isolation, we sit within the environment, you know, our families, our social lives. If you're moving from school to university perhaps your environment is going to change quite considerably. And it's really important that we're aware of that, and that we're thinking about our impact on the environment, but also the impact of the environment on us. And that interaction too. So, we'll be talking about that too. And one other thing to say about that in relation to well-being is that well-being isn't just created individually by ourselves, our well-being is impacted by other people's well-being. And we also impact on theirs. So, we'll be thinking about that too, when we talk about social connection, which is one of the elements that we will be talking about in the weeks coming up. And we also need a level of self-awareness to be able to make adjustments to the inputs of our wellbeing bucket. So, we're going to be encouraging you to think and reflect over the coming weeks on your bucket. We'll have some exercises and some fun things for you to do about that.

So, the areas that we're going to cover in the coming weeks, next week we'll be talking about the bucket and talking in more detail about that as a concept, and the impact the environment has on it, and so on. And then we're going to take specific elements for the following weeks, individually, just because there's been so much research on many of these areas. And there's a lot to share with you about how to make tweaks to these different areas and improve your well-being through that. And you won't want to do all of it, you'll just want to pick what resonates and you think works for you. The areas that we're going to be covering will be sleep, loads of research about the importance of sleep recently, something that perhaps gets cut in the first weeks of university, and something that all the students mentioned in their interviews, how important it was to recognise that and to counteract the downside of the party, always important to party, not saying don't party, but recognising the impact it can have over time. Nutrition. If you're having to self-cater for the first time, then you're going to be needing to think about what you're eating, even if you're not self-catering, you'll probably want to be thinking about balanced diet. So, we've got a really great session there for you about eating and healthy eating. Movement, the importance not just of going to the gym, but of generally moving and why we don't do enough of it and how we can make little tweaks to improve that quite dramatically, very easily. Recovery, the time to not just sleep, but just relax. We often don't build in that time to our day. We're on the go all the time. So, do you have half an hour to think about that? We'll talk more details about that Organisation. There's so much that we're going to cover in this session on organisation around goals and focus and how to set yourself up for success, especially recognising that there are practical elements of settling into your new environment. So, what are those? And how can best manage that for yourself. Then prospering, what does it take to build a life in which you feel that you're doing well, so we're going to talk a bit about financials there, but also about your why for the next stage of your life, be it university a job, work, whatever it is, what is giving you meaning and purpose from what you're doing. Having fun, we forget to build in fun to play, kids will do it and as we grow older, we forget about it. So, we're going to have a fun session about fun. And friendship. We've talked in one session already about friendship we will refer you back to that, but also build on that, and connection, the importance of

belonging and being connected to a community. And then finally, celebration, because we very rarely take time out to really recognise our achievements and celebrate them. So, we're going to devote a whole session to that. So, these are all the inputs to our well-being bucket. And I wonder how well you are already using and utilising those and having them contribute to your well-being right now, perhaps you'd like to just give that some thought. And we'll talk about that more in the next session, the next podcast episode.

Elizabeth Gillies 17:49

Some busy times coming up for us, lots of ideas of how you're looking after yourself, especially in this time of transition?

Louise Wiles 18:01

And as Elizabeth said earlier on, all of those elements, they're not discrete, they all interact as well, they all interact to, to provide an overall sense of well-being and it's all personal to us too, I think it's really important to underline that, we're not going to be telling you 10 things you must do. We're telling you 10 things you could do. And it's then up to you to decide what you would prefer to do.

So, I think that's, that's it for the introduction.

Elizabeth Gillies 18:30

Yes. And so please join us and give us some feedback. You know, there's places for feedback and on the podcast, so we'd love to hear if you're looking forward to anything in particular that's coming up. Or you'd like us to cover something in particular, it'd be good to hear from.

Louise Wiles 18:52

Yes, absolutely. And please, whilst we're on the subject of feedback, it would be fantastic, if you could follow us on the podcast, click the Follow button, but also leave us a review. That would be brilliant too. Thanks so much for listening.

Elizabeth Gillies 19:08

I look forward to the well-being bucket then.

Bye bye for now.

Thank you for listening, we hope you enjoyed this overview of what is to come in series three. As an introduction for you to this topic we have this little task for you. Take out your journal, or some paper and give yourself ten minutes to think about what you know about your well-being. Thinking about the bucket concept, what fills your bucket, and what drains it. This will provide a great snapshot for you at the beginning of this series.

Also, Remember, you can go back and listen to the five student conversations, they are **episodes 11 to 15**.

We also mentioned Episode 6 – Asking for Help, always a good thing to think about when embarking on something new – we'll just say on this point that research demonstrates people are so much more

willing to help them we ever anticipate – and actually, asking for help can be a great way to begin to develop new relationships, something that is so important when relocating and starting a new life away from home – so go and check out that episode to.

We will be back next week with **Episode 22** – when we will be talking about an interesting broad foundational framework for thinking about your well-being, a framework that we will come back to over and over again during this series.

Meanwhile – head over to our website: [Louisewiles.com/successful-student-transitions](https://louisewiles.com/successful-student-transitions) to see more about past episode and download transcripts if you'd like to read instead or as well as listening.

And where-ever you are in the world, please take care and stay well. Bye bye for now.

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