

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 23 The Well-being Bucket

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 podcasts 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

“So we want you to be thinking about how you're going to be intentionally filling your bucket on a daily basis. Learning to notice what you're doing, and how it registers with you, registers a positive impact with a filler, but also registers the negative impact of a drain. And filling your own bucket, because we know there's other buckets around. But filling your own bucket, it's not selfish, it's self care. It's so that you have the energy and resources to do what you need to do. Even in those times of unexpected, especially in the times of transition.” 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 out 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.

If you'd like to access the full transcript and show notes that accompany episodes of this podcast then click on the link on the product description given on your podcast app. That will take you to the website where you can download our materials, and while you're there why not register for our newsletter, so we can keep in touch and send you other goodies as well. So, let's get started, where Elizabeth is going to share a concept with you that we've called The Well-being Bucket.

Elizabeth Gillies 02:22

So, welcome. Welcome to another episode of Successful Student Transitions. A time to thrive. And it's Elizabeth Gillies and Louise Wiles. And we're continuing talking about well-being, following the information that Louise was sharing about PERMA. And today we're going to think about how you're using and maybe even assessing your own well-being in a daily way. And especially important during a transition, when you might be focused on the things that aren't going so well and stuff like that. And there will be things like that, but also, there'll be the flip side of it as well. So last time, we talked about Russ Harris's double sided coin, there is the good stuff and the challenging stuff. And that's what well-being is about and how you manage it. So well-being is changeable, you can add to it, some things are to take away, and you might have read something a bit similar to a kind of strategy or a tool, called the stress bucket, which was introduced first by Brabban and Turkington (2002). And we kind of, with other people, have taken that idea and turned it into a well-being bucket. But we've also added some other kind of dynamic elements into it, and situating it in an environment. So we want you to imagine that you hold your well-being in in a bucket, right. Everybody's got a bucket of well-being, sometimes your bucket will be full, sometimes it'll be a bit empty. The things that will be in our bucket will be unique to us. There'll be unique to our be well-being, maybe you draw from things that we talked last time about PERMA, you might be thinking about 'Yeah, for my well-being in my bucket, you know, I need a lot of positive emotions or I need connection with other people or you know, I need to have real meaning in

what I'm doing.' So there are things that will be in this well-being bucket that adds and we can fill up a bucket in that way. Louise, do you know what fills your bucket?

Louise Wiles 04:42

Sleep which I mentioned in the last episode. Sleep, healthy nutrition, thinking about food. Eating a healthy balanced diet. Definitely, getting out into nature walking, I have a dog, so going out with my dog, Teddy, daily and yeah, I really feel it when I don't do that actually. And taking some form of exercise, I play tennis, go to the gym, not all the time, not every day, obviously, but you know, that through the week. I think also my work as well, I find it very interesting. And so for me, yeah, I get very engaged when we're thinking about the PERMA, the PERMA framework, we just go just got this, which we described in the previous episode, engagement being the second of the pillars. Definitely getting engaged in work and feeling that sense of accomplishment is really important for me. And family connection, friendships. Yes. All of that.

Elizabeth Gillies 05:47

Actually, a lot of the PERMA isn't it? And that's what we're seeing, this is from research, but it actually comes out in our everyday lives as well. And just knowing how you can fill your bucket, and maybe there's some days that you can't fill it so much. That's what will happen in your life. So knowing this stuff that fills your bucket is really important. And also knowing this bucket, as well as having a tap or taps that can fill the bucket, there's going to be holes or drains in the bucket. So there's going to be some leakage. And again, those things will likely be unique to us. It might be the other side of that coin that we talked about. But these drains and leaks are inevitable. And they're often more apparent in stressful times and times of change. We can maybe, as I said, focus a lot more on what's going wrong, rather than trying to fill up our bucket. So maybe as well just take a moment to think about what are the drains for you? Are they the opposite of your fillers? Are they something completely different? Are they anything related to things we talked about in PERMA, when those things aren't there for you? So we want you to be kind of developing a sense of what your own fillers and drains are. So this bucket that's there with its tap, you can fill, and the holes that are the leaking, it's situated in an environment. And that environment is really important for your well-being bucket. Some environments will enable you to put lots of fillers in your bucket. Like, you know, as Louise was saying, you know, playing tennis or going to a tennis club and playing well, having a sense of achievement, there's something that's going to be a time that maybe it's going to be easy to fill your bucket. But some environments might be more of a drain on your bucket. So we've maybe even though another kind of thing to bring into the equation is, you have your fillers and your drains, but also what environments are easier for you to fill your bucket, what environments are going to be more challenging. And it's worth thinking about, we have a handle on this bucket, so we can take this bucket into different environments. And our well-being bucket might change, depending on the environment we're in. It's also worth thinking about in this environment that there'll be other buckets, it's not just your bucket there. And there's other buckets that will be wanting to be filled. And other buckets that you will see have large leaks. And whatever is going on for these other buckets will likely have an impact on your bucket, because we are social beings. And we will naturally want to fill other people's buckets and help others when we see their buckets are emptying. So be aware of the leaks and holes for yourself, the leaks and fillers for you. Be aware of environments. Be aware that your buckets portable. Be aware that other people's buckets may well

have a demand or impact on you, and you may well have an impact on theirs as well. So there's your bucket, maybe central in the page, you've got your taps, you've got your leaks, you've got some kind of environment where you are, be at work or university or a home or somewhere. And then there's other maybe prominent buckets in your life, the people that have their own buckets. And if we want to dig a little bit deeper, if we want to kind of think a little bit about, not all your fillers will be the same on the same day, at the same time. Not all your leaks will be the same. So this is kind of changeable. So they might change for you at different times. And when we think about PERMA, and we think about these other things we're going to be introducing and talking about in the weeks to come, like sleep and nutrition, and movement, and relationships. We want you to give yourself a kind of wide view of what are your potential fillers. But we also want you to think about how the, and I'm gonna use this specific word and it comes from Barbara Fredrickson, but how do they register with you? What impact are they making on you? And it's quite kind of straightforward to scale it in some way. So, if we had an example, and we imagine the register of a low impact being one, and a high impact being 10. Suppose, and we're going to go back to these kind of things, talk about things that we came up from PERMA, and we've talked about here. So if you've got a good night's sleep, and you think well, that's really important for me, that's a really important filler. So I'm going to give that 9 out of 10. Keeping on top of my work or writing my essays, I'm going to give that that's another 8 for me, that's really important. Keeping regular contact type of friends, especially meeting in person, I'm going to see that 7, getting some daily exercises is a filler for me. I have to do it every day. That's a 6. I know for me having my breakfast in the morning, having some protein, being hydrated is really important. I'm gonna give myself a 5. So we have a filler, some of $8+8+7+6+5 = 34$. But of course, as well as the fillers, there's going to be drains, there's always going to be drains in our bucket. And they might be the opposite of the fillers. But supposing our drains this day are: the bus was late, so you miss most of your morning tutorial or your morning meeting. Not a good thing, I really like to be on time 10 out of 10 for me, that's a big drain for me. A really good friend has to take time out of university or work, so you're really going to miss them. That's another 10 for me. I've been given at the last minute some work that I've got to fit in to everything else in my current workload, and that's going to be really tricky for me to do, given everything else that's going on, that's going to be a 7. And then, you know, I spent too much time on my social media, I really went down this rabbit hole, there's another 7. So my sum $10+10+7+7=34$. So my fillers for this session, or this time that I'm doing my bucket, my fillers are 34 and my drains are 34. What does that mean? It means my buckets empty. So I don't know what it'd be like for you having an empty bucket, but you really could have be quite drained of your well-being, there's no reserves, there's no capacity to take on any other challenges, there might not even be capacity to meet the current challenges that you've got, you might get into stress. So it's really important to think about how you keep these fillers in that it's going to have capacity in your bucket. So you've got the ability to do the things that come to you that you might know, but also things that you don't know are coming your way. So that you've got them managed, you've got the well-being to deal with them. So ideally, you know, we want, if our drains are 34, we don't want our filters to be 35 or 36, we've got to want them to be a lot more than that. So we want you to be thinking about how you're going to be intentionally filling your bucket on a daily basis. Learning to notice what you're doing, and how it registers with you, registers a positive impact with a filler, but also registers the negative impact of a drain. And filling your own bucket, because we know there's other buckets around. But filling your own bucket, it's not selfish, it's self care. It's so that you have the energy and resources to do what you need to do. Even in those times of unexpected,

especially in the times of transition. With your well-being bucket full, you'll have plenty of capacity to care for yourself and other people. Any any further comments, Louise about a well-being bucket and noticing your fillers and drains and how you keep your capacity?

Louise Wiles 15:04

Yeah, I think actually, just as I sat and listened to it, I was asking myself, is this something I do? No! But it's a really useful way of thinking about well-being overall. And probably we don't think about our well-being overall, we focus on elements of it, what do I focus on? Well, I know I want to go for a walk, so that would be an input you know, fitness, yes, input, but does that happen every day? No, so then that has a negative or drain sometimes when I don't do it. So, I think that's the power of this, it gets you to think about it from a holistic view. And hopefully as we progress through the weeks, and we're adding different elements to the tap, you know what we can pull in and, and you decide personally what resonates most for you, because we're absolutely not telling you, you have to do stuff, we're going to be telling you what works for some people and what might work for you, but then you make the choices. And so it can be an experiment as well. So I think that's going to be a useful way of using the bucket, you know, taking time to reflect every few days on 'okay, what was draining me yesterday and why, and what can I put in today that will prevent that leakage perhaps from happening again or in the same way? So yeah, I can see that it encourages us to really think about well-being as a holistic thing. And to then be a bit more analytical for ourselves personally about what works. I love the idea of buckets, a collection of buckets to represent our sort of social connections and how we all can drain each other's buckets as well. So that's a really important point, but also input to other people's buckets too. And I must admit just that as a concept, it just made me think, oh, yeah, this morning, did I drain or input to my kids buckets today? And I'm not sure I think it was pretty fairly neutral, because it wasn't very with it this morning. So yeah, that makes me think, Okay, what could I do differently this evening, to ensure that my input is more positive than it is negative? I think that's a really valuable thing to think about too. So, yeah, I really like that. And I love the idea that it's portable from environment to environment. I think we probably don't think enough about the impact environment has on us, and the influence we can have over our environments as well. So that's a really important thing to think about.

Elizabeth Gillies 17:48

Just one I have got this kind of thought around that we can be more in charge of how we fill our buckets than we drain our buckets.

Louise Wiles 18:00

That's kind of the message that's coming to me as I've been as I was listening to you, I was suddenly thinking, you know, I'll think about discrete things that I'm contributing to my buckets, but I'm not thinking them about them as a collective. So I think that's the real power of this, but then also, yeah, focus on the inputs, because then that kind of means you don't need to think so much about the leakage. I mean, it yeah, okay, let's learn from the leakages as well. But as long as we keeping our well-being bucket full, or, you know, at a good level, then yeah, we're going to be more resilient, I suppose, using that word, and able to cope with the challenges that come our way, the struggles we talked about in the last session.

Elizabeth Gillies 18:40

So we're going to be using a lot of ideas from PERMA, then about how we, we can fill our buckets. And you know, and the things we're going to be asking you about are questions about: How does this register with you? Is this a big filler for you? Is it not really a big filler for you? Because, like we've been mentioning, you know, the things that make up people's well-being is unique, and there is a dynamic nature to it. So it's not just one thing on its own, it's likely when you're going for a walk with your dog. Likely not, you're enjoying spending time with your dog, that's a relationship thing, but you're enjoying being out and getting some movement and maybe a sense of kind of achievement and a bit of free time a bit of relaxation or recovery or something. So it's that kind of dynamic quality, that often activities, a bit like our emotions, they just don't come in ones. But these things will have different kinds of registers. There'll be an accumulation of things for each factor about how that will help us.

Okay, thanks for listening. And going on from here. We've kind of given you the foundations of things we're going to talk about. And now we're going on to talk about more specific titles. We're going to be talking about sleep, nutrition, movement, recovery, relationships, community, organisation, meaning, fun and prosper. And we haven't chosen any particular order for that. But we decided that those were kind of linked in with PERMA things but also are really important when you are making a transition into something new.

Louise Wiles 20:44

So, I wonder how your well-being bucket is looking right now?

What inputs enhances your well-being? Time with friends, walks in nature, good quality sleep, your favourite foods, study or doing interesting work that holds meaning for you? Just a few suggestions. Have a think now about what does help you to feel good and function effectively through the ups and downs of life?

Then take a moment to think about the drains? Sometimes they may be intentional, for example, studying late at night to reach deadlines, necessary sometimes and good from an accomplishment perspective but draining from a sleep perspective. What other drains have meant you have felt less than tip top this week? As we are talking about new beginnings, one drain may be the effort it takes to connect and make new friends. Of course, there is an upside – you will build friendships over time, the downside is it can feel quite exhausting at the time – so think about how you can care for yourself at the same time. Perhaps an input would be talking to a long time friend back home.

So, hopefully you get the idea.

We hope this helps and we will be returning to the wellbeing bucket in future podcast episodes.

Meanwhile; access transcripts and show notes for some episodes by clicking on the link in the show description and while you're there register for our newsletter so we can send additional resources to you as well. Or go [HERE](#)

We'll be back next week -please follow and share the podcast to help us spread the word.

Wishing you a really great week, bye bye for now.

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