



CONNECTIONS

The Counselling Newsletter

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CAMPUS SURVIVAL 101



Experience · Adventures · Challenges

Connections is a publication of the Counselling & Wellness Services distributed to Sunway University & Sunway College student

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Nurturing the Seeds of Wisdom

I know it's been said so many times that it has become a sort of cliché among the minds of college students. "Don't take these classes" "Don't join these clubs" "Don't hang out with these people" These 'advices' that are given to college students will hardwire them to think differently, to be defensive, and be timid. They will start setting barriers, and boundaries, with the impression that doing so would protect them. But, that is not exactly true.

If they spend all their time thinking about what they shouldn't do, would they have paid any attention towards what they should do?

That's the fine line between surviving college, and thriving in it. The best way to transcend merely surviving in college would be to not be too scared to try anything, but be brave enough to try everything. There are no barriers in college, and students are encouraged to try something different everyday (so as it doesn't break the law). This is because knowledge comes from experience. And the only way to experience anything, is to at least try something.

Those people who tell you not to take a certain class will tell you that because they themselves took that class before. Those who tell you not to be friends with that clique of people were friends with them before. They know it because they have experienced it before. But then, it is true that individual experiences are skewed according to each person.

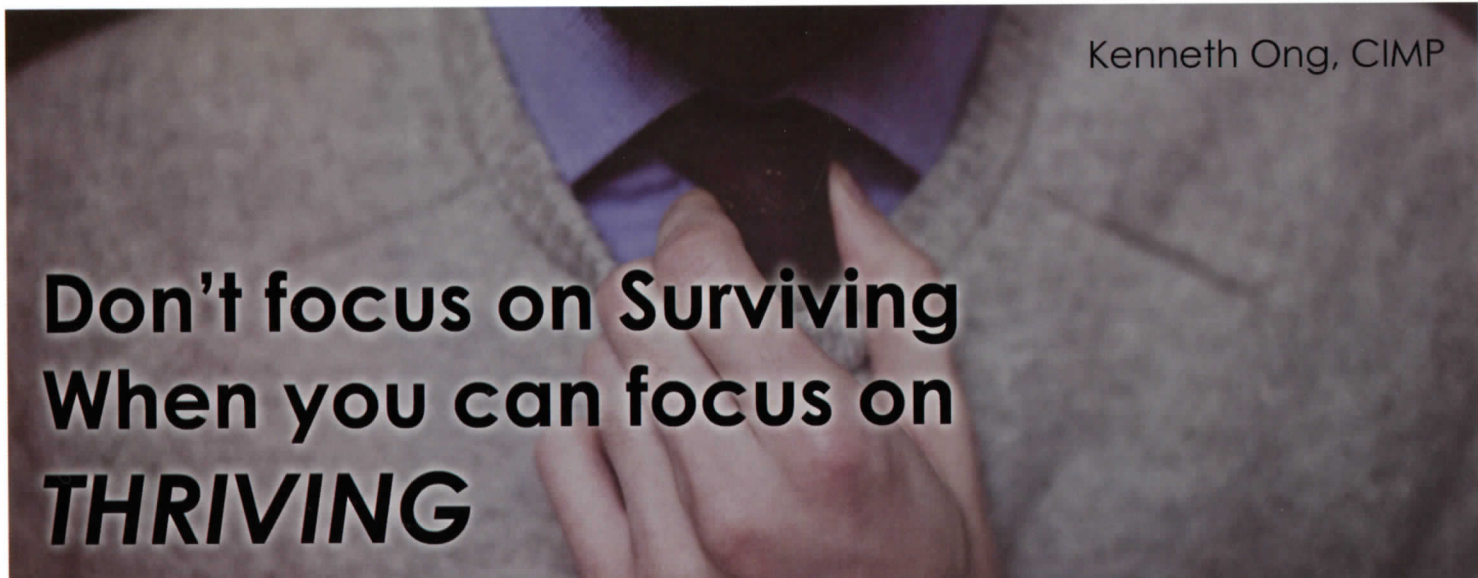
No one size fits all, and what may be a toxic waste dump of a class for one student, could be a glistening paradise of knowledge for the other. What could be a polarizing, offensive gang of people to one student, could be lifelong friends to the other.

It is all a matter of perspective, how we view what surrounds us. It does us no good to have limited perspective, then, as we would know so precious little of what we think we know.

College students are curious, inquisitive, and have a burning need to gain precious new knowledge, and new experiences. That should be what drives students to college every day. And once you realise this, then you would see a world of possibility open up before you.

Never have the chances of becoming an engineer, a scientist, a musician, or a businessman been nearer to grasp than in college. And that is why college was conceived in the first place. Human's imagination and daringness to try something new had led them to create a place where everyday is different, every single person unique, every class or club special; and we as the lucky few who have been granted the opportunity to experience the true meaning of college life should not squander it.

Live life to the fullest, they say. The same applies to college life.



Kenneth Ong, CIMP

**Don't focus on Surviving
When you can focus on
*THRIVING***

Set Sail and *EMBARK!*

Bernard Goh, SUBS

When I first came to Sunway University, I was 3 days late. I missed the orientation, and people already have their own group of friends. On my first day, while others are in class, I went about getting my papers done and rushing to get my classes sorted out. I was really scared and nervous at that time because university seems so big and new to me.

Now, I would like to share my experience and advise to those who just got on board this ship called “University” and hopefully, will get you guys sailing through the challenging tides and beautiful sea!

First thing you need to do would be to attend the orientations (which I hope you did) because that’s where all the useful information are circulated to students. If you didn’t, don’t worry, seek help from either your faculty’s admin office or Student Life. They should be able to assist you. Second, join the various clubs and societies that Sunway University has in store for you. From Anime Club to Sunway Ensemble, there will be something for you to explore and experience.

Third and **THE MOST IMPORTANT ONE**, don’t forget to make friends! They say you depend on parents at home, and friends outside. I totally agree. Having friends will definitely brighten up your university life. If you are new to the environment or even our culture, don’t be afraid to share and exchange the different or common cultures you guys have. Find out common hobbies or interests to talk about such as sports, movies, or even stamps (if you guys are collectors of it). You never know how a single friend that shares something similar to you will change your university life into one worth remembering for life.

I remember when I was taking a power nap at the level 2 garden of NUB, I woke up to the sound of girls singing. When I opened my eyes, I saw 2 girls, a Japanese and a Malaysian, singing Korean and English songs together. I had a great time thanks to them as they kept singing merrily and in high spirits one after another. They also talked while they listen to some music and study how to sing certain new songs that they discovered. Who would have known that liking to sing could bring 2 girls with different nationalities together, allowing them to enjoy such a lovely evening? To me, they looked really happy and satisfied with what they were doing. Such is the power of friendship.

One last thing, many people, including myself, are inclined to assume how others perceive us. I hope we can all throw that mindset into the garbage bin or flush it down the toilet. You never know how the other person might react unless you actually say or do something. Everyone’s way of thinking is so unique and special that it’s just different from one person to the other. Same goes for you.

Anyway, it’s really simple to have a fun-filled and satisfying university life as long as you dare to step up to it and face whatever challenges that may come to you. Never give up and don’t give excuses! **Keep Empowering Yourself Successfully (K.E.Y.S)** and you will make it through.

Feeling much better and prepared to enjoy your university life? Let’s set sail and embark on this mysterious yet exciting adventure together!

Cheers!

Find your motivation, as it is a key to your success in college and university.

The most challenging obstacle in college and university is to stay motivated particularly in the midst of hardships. Luckily, it is possible. Whenever you fail to keep your promises (eg: completing homework on time), it is worth identifying your limiting step: what is stopping you from keeping them?

Another habit that people commonly neglect is positive self-talk. There is a saying that you are your own worst critic. In contrary, I believe that it is crucial to keep a balance of the Cs (critiques and compliments). Successful people know how to pick themselves up because they are aware of their own strengths and weaknesses. Therefore, positive self-talk can help you stay persistent and driven.


Prior to Sunway University, I was a conservative student whereby I studied in and out of school. I was not actively involved in extra-curricular activities because excellent result was my ultimatum. I did not believe in the significance of clubs and societies. Unfortunately, I failed to obtain my desired results which had cost my dream ambition at the time. This has led me to do self-reflection with the lingering thought: what did I do wrong?

in my first semester, I continued being conservative. My weekly routine included attending classes, doing work at Sun-U Apartment and going home during the weekends. It was only in my second semester that I gained the courage to do differently by joining a few clubs namely Sunway Peer Counselling Volunteers and Book Lovers United. As time went by, I realized the changes in my personality and behaviour – I became more talkative, outgoing and independent.

From then on, I set my motivation to self-improvement because I believed that change is the only constant in my life. When others feared change, I learned to take it positively. In other words, I should say, do and think with an aim to improve myself. As such, it would be a success to graduate from Sunway University as a better version of myself.

However, what if you are not sure what success means to you? This is not unusual amongst youths because we do not have answers to all our questions. There is nothing wrong with this. My advice is to explore – be courageous in finding your inner drive and passion. It can be as small as helping others. It can also be as ambitious as saving the environment. This might be a long process for some of you but I can assure you that the taste of success will prevail.





Throwback of My First Day in College

Remy Lee, FST

I don't think I knew what to expect when I enrolled in college. I was confident when I registered because I was determined to have a fresh start. All I knew was that I came alone to this brand new environment and that I was going to take it head on. I wished I knew what my friends had said in their articles earlier but I didn't. It didn't help that I was a natural introvert. It truly was a challenging time for me, especially since I'm just that one person amongst the 400 new students enrolled in the course. But if I'm now in my degree, you would know that I've survived it!

There were many things that I've learnt these few years and keep on learning until this day. I've learnt that balancing different areas in life is an important skill to have. I clearly remember that I only had to learn to balance 10 subjects for SPM back in secondary school but studies aren't the only thing that needs to be balanced in college.

I've learnt that I can't expect my new friends to be like old friends. I've known my friends in secondary school for about five years. Most of the time, they can gauge my mood and know when I need a listening ear. I missed those "mind reading" friends when I went to college. I kind of expected to have such relationships the moment I stepped into college. Looking back at it now, I felt that that was being unfair to my new friends and myself. I had taken at least two years to build that kind of relationship but I have only known these new friends for a few days to a month. I learnt to be curious again in order to build new friendship.

I've learnt that financial management is an important skill to have. It is especially challenging and interesting on how resourceful need to be, meaning finding the cheapest food and to be able to save some extra cash to get what you need at the end of the month.

I've learnt that having a mentor and to continue with personal development is important. There is more to life than studies and it important for me to understand and start to learn fully.

I've learnt that it is important to start to build your career portfolio and widen your network while you are in university. It gives you have a head start compared to your peers. It will be truly helpful to have guidance from a mentor in this area as well.

I've learnt that what I focus on affects my mind set, my feelings and how I go about during the day. My mentor once told me that the cup is always full, the question is whether you focus on the water or the air in the cup. It truly opened my mind. Many things happened around me but what do I focus on for me to get through the day and help myself is most important? I choose to be my best friend rather than my worst enemy.

Most importantly, I learnt that I need to continue learning as we never stop journeying in life. I would rather live to the fullest as I explore life's journey.

1. Set realistic goals

1. **S**pecific. What exactly do you want to accomplish?
2. **M**easurable. How do you evaluate your goals?
3. **A**ttainable. Your goal is within ability to achieve outcome
4. **R**elevant. Is it aligned with your objectives?
5. **T**ime-bound. Set specific date for completion.

2. Manage how stress affects you

1. Learn to say no . Concentrate on things that are important
2. Change the way you are working with the stressor
3. Change opinion of the stressor
4. Let go of uncontrollable things

3. Discover new relaxation techniques

1. Deep breathing
2. Be present, use mindfulness
3. Reach out to others, get support from them
4. Exercise
5. Find out what's best for you!

4. Change how you see the situation

1. Gear your thoughts towards things you can do
2. Look at the big picture. What do you want to achieve?
How are you working towards it?
3. Tell yourself to focus on one part at a time.
Structure your goal into manageable sections

CAMPUS STARTER PACK

FRIENDSHIP

Understand that your friends in college are different people, they need time to get to know you. You will need time to adjust to a new environment. Don't be afraid to express and keep developing your friendships!

MOTIVATION

Know your why! Beginnings are always full of excitement, it's the start when you have the most to take with you. knowing your why will help you keep the fire burning even when you face challenges.

TAKE CARE OF YOUR WELL-BEING

Remember to recharge and recuperate. Listen to what your body is telling you. If you feel tired, just relax and recharge! When you feel down and tired, remember that you're not alone and that your well-being matters.

Stay open to new experiences

DISCOVER NEW THINGS ABOUT YOURSELF AND ACTIVITIES YOU ENJOY, WHILE MEETING PEOPLE WHO SHARE THOSE QUALITIES AS YOU DO! OPEN YOURSELF TO NEW EXPERIENCES AND LEARN TO BE A LEADER TO EASE YOUR PATH INTO YOUR CAREER FIELD.

PRIORITIZE

PRIORITIZE THE THINGS THAT ARE MOST IMPORTANT. DON'T WAIT UNTIL IT BECOMES MOST URGENT. DO THEM ACCORDING TO YOUR CAPABILITIES. DARE TO SAY NO BECAUSE YOU KNOW WHAT YOU WANT TO ACHIEVE.

Time Management

HAVE A PLAN SO THAT YOU HAVE THE LUXURY TO BE FLEXIBLE BECAUSE YOU KNOW WHEN ALL THE IMPORTANT DATES ARE. BE IT GOOGLE CALENDAR, A PHONE APP OR A PHYSICAL SCHEDULE- NOTE DOWN IMPORTANT EVENTS!

THROWBACK

~PCU's Past Events 2016/17



Be a Buddy, Not a Bully

An event to raise awareness towards different forms of bullying and its consequences



Take That First Speech

A collaboration with Sunway Toastmasters to boost students' self-esteem through public speaking



Health is Your Best Wealth

A workshop by Mr. Mok (Sunway Sport Advisor) to increase health awareness



Expect Nothing, Appreciate Everything

An event to express gratitude towards community workers in Sunway University College



Jumbo Day

A family day for all PCU members from different intakes



Love & Protect Yourself

Workshops on sexual harassment prevention by Women's Aid Organisation & Mr. Francis Albert (Jujitsu Corporate Trainer)



Every month

Listen. Talk. Connect.

Mind Matters

Dialogue session regarding various mental health topics based on the theme of the month.

Speakout

“My Experience in PCV”

Ernni - BAF

“PCV taught me to understand how to listen to others better, how to phrase my words when talking to another person, and I learned a lot of valuable skills through much activities focused on peer support. I am now at a better position to help out my peers who are in need.”

Rohini - ADTP

"I realised how important 'past experiences' were when I joined university. PCV was a platform that enabled me to take part in executing events. In PCV, there was no 'past experience' needed. All I needed was the interest and willingness to commit."

Seraphine - BPSY

“Peer Counselling Volunteers, PCV is definitely a fun club to join! What I learned is more than what I expected – bunch of great and supportive friends, enlightening workshops as well as a number of activities. Everything is interesting; what are you waiting for? Join and have fun with us!”

Ren Khai - DIT

“I faced some personal problems before, and through joining PCV, I can get some ideas or inspirations for solving my problems.”

Chai Yin - DIBA

“If alma mater were to be my second home then I would like to say PCV is the room! PCV, a big family filled with love, care and tolerance. Thanks PCV!”

Lip Fung - BAS

"A great opportunity to learn the importance and ways to support our peers. Love the people and the culture in our PCV family too!"

Chai Ni - BBM

“PCV is the place where there are people who are always there and ready to catch me if I fall. It is like a second home.”



Empathize Encourage Empower



Understanding more about us..

How do we provide a peer support network in Sunway campus?

Through our Peer-to-Peer (P2P) movement!

Approach us!



LET'S CHAT

Provides emotional support and listening ear

Every Wednesday, 1-2pm,

Peer Support Room, Student LIFE

Prefer to share concerns anonymously?



WRITE TO US

<http://bit.ly/sunwaypeer2peer>

Are you passionate to help others?

Join our family !

Register at: <http://bit.ly/sunwaypcv>

OUR ACTIVITIES



- ✓ Training
- ✓ Jumbo Day (PCV Family Day)
- ✓ Mind Matters Dialogue
- ✓ Exhibitions
- ✓ Community Service
- ✓ Connections Newsletter
- ✓ Talks/Workshops



Empathize

Encourage

Empower



Sunway Peer Counselling Volunteers



sunwaypcv@mail.sunway.edu.my

CALL US!

24/7 MENTAL HEALTH

CRISIS
HOTLINE



018-3893220

**WE ARE
HERE
FOR
YOU.**



Peer Counselling Volunteers
Empathise • Encouragement • Empower

