

# OPINION

## Can You Prepare for the Rest of Your Life?

BY FAITH FITZHUGH

**I**S IT POSSIBLE TO PREPARE for the rest of our lives? The answer is maybe. I think it's more complicated than that. We have people who just go with the flow and never plan for anything; we have people who spend their whole lives planning each detail meticulously; we also have the people whose lives are planned out by their parents or family.

For those of us who do have wiggle room when it comes to what we want to do with our lives, I think preparation is important. Being prepared and planning will never hurt someone though you have to have the skill of being adaptable and evolving your plan, even forming a new one if the original plan fails.

We have to recognize that we don't know the future and that things can change at a moment's notice. I think the first step is to recognize the different paths that interest you and start with the ideas and goals you have. Then, build off of each of those goals and plans but keep them open-ended, so if one of those plans falls out or if you want to combine those ideas you'll be able to shift and adapt easily.

Change is inevitable, and we have to have the ability to evolve because we don't know what is in store for our lives. Our plans change depending on what happens to us or in the world. Our lives change based on new people we meet, if we have a near-death experience, when we fail, or when we succeed; anything could inspire or push us to change the path we're on.

I think it's also important to live our lives as well; we can prepare while we are living. Our life doesn't start when our career starts or when we go to college or turn 18; our life starts the moment we are born; our lives are now. We need a healthy balance or preparing for our future while living the best we can with the lives we have. We don't need to spend every second of our lives trying to plan for the perfect life when there is no way to plan for every possible outcome.

The best approach is to go with the flow yet a structured flow. There are times to plan and times to flow; if you spend too much planning you'll be constantly stressed, worried, and/or unhappy; if you spend too much time flowing you won't be properly prepared for when things go wrong, and become too careless. If you don't get anything else from this article remember these three facts of life:

1. Change is inevitable
2. Life is about balancing being responsible and having fun
3. You get one earthly life

And for the ones who are struggling with breaking out of toxic or strict family expectations with still being in one, I want to say that it won't last forever, pick your battles wisely, and remember this is your life and anyone that tries to say otherwise isn't who you need in your life.

## Preparing for Finals

BY LOUISA HAMMOND

**O**KAY, GUYS. WE'RE NEARING THE END of the school year. Less than fifty days until we get to put away our books and take a break--unless you're taking summer classes, but hey, that'll only be for two months. The final day of this semester is even more exciting for those graduating having finally completed college and getting a real opportunity to go out into the real world.

However, like most things we want in life, a completed year of college isn't just handed to us on a silver platter, we have to work hard for it. In this case, in order to cross the finish line, we need to go through finals, which can come in the form of tests, presenta-

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tions, projects, and essays, a bit of a pick your poison game right there. However, as daunting or unpleasant as these tests and papers may be, there are some ways to conquer them while still keeping your mental health in order.

1. Try to figure out what the final project or test will be and when it is due. Even the toughest and strictest teachers will want their students to do well in their class (if not, this should be a concern), and will let you know when the exam will happen or when the final paper will be due.

2. Once you know what to expect, put aside some time to study and complete the project or paper as soon as you can, especially if you've had a hard time with the class.

3. Don't set aside the school work to the last minute and complete it in one day or night.

4. Even though you should complete the assignment on time, be aware that it's alright to have a break every now and then, whether to read a book for fun, watch a movie or TV show, or spend time with friends or family.

5. Get some sleep and don't spend all night working or studying, especially on the night before the test, when you should get a good night's sleep.

6. Don't go into a test with an empty stomach, you'll probably already be a little nervous while taking a test and hunger might add unwanted discomfort.

7. Don't be afraid to get help. If you're feeling unsure about how your paper or project is turning out, Concordia has the writing lab with tutors that are happy to read through and critique your essays in less than 24 hours. If you are struggling with classes or are afraid of taking finals, either talk or email your teacher about your concerns and, as long as it's reasonable, a compromise can most likely be made.

Ultimately, while the last few weeks of school may be stressful, if you understand the stakes and put in some time to put your best work forward, the finish line won't be so hard to cross.

## Concordia Mental Health

BY FAITH FITZHUGH

**C**ONCORDIA IS A COLLEGE THAT FREELY and openly talks about mental health. Concordia supports it, gives and provides resources, and they have events to recognize and talk about it. The Student Accessibility Services or SAS has on school therapists for students to come to talk to for free. SAS services also work closely with clinics nearby to help students receive long-term care, and of course, the SAS sends out different therapist groups and services by email. SAS also has a lot of different resources on its website. There are a number of clubs that support mental health, talk about it, and plan events as well.

A lot of Resident Assistants or RAs plan a lot of different breaks and distress events like crafts, activities, hot chocolate time, and more. Residence life and CAB also plan a lot of mental break events as well. For example, they have been doing a lot of mindful yoga events as well.

CSP also has mindful mental health spaces to destress with fidget toys and resources as well where you can sit, breathe, and take a break. There is one on the bottom floor of the library which is underneath the staircase. At the beginning of the year, students took green handkerchiefs and put them on their backpacks to represent that they could be a resource or someone a person struggling could talk to without judgment.

First years always had monthly visits with their Peer Advisor to check in on mental health and so does everyone with their RAs. There have been different zoom meetings/seminars to talk about mental health as well. Last week was a Mental Health Awareness Week. That was set up in which each day there was a quiz or event related to taking care of your mental health every day.

CSP Ministry also opens doors for anyone struggling as well. I personally know that Pastor Tom and Shelly are amazing and caring people to talk to.

Another way CSP supports mental health is that a lot of teachers/faculty are very open-minded and supportive of you when you need someone to talk to. Self-love club is a club that just started this year as well that solely focuses on your mental health. They sent emails for about a month with daily affirmations, quotes, activities, and resources all focused on mental health.

Another club that focuses on mental health a lot is the Psychology club which has a lot of events talking about how psychology can be useful in taking care of our mental health. CSP also has a club called the Hidden Opponent that focuses on specifically the mental health of athletes.

So if you are feeling alone, depressed, or worse please give these different resources a chance. I know how challenging, embarrassing, and stressful it can be. I know it makes it even harder to go to these events with school, work, and being tired. I know that it is worth scrapping up the energy and taking the time to do these events. What I can tell you is that CSP does its best to support every student in any way it can.