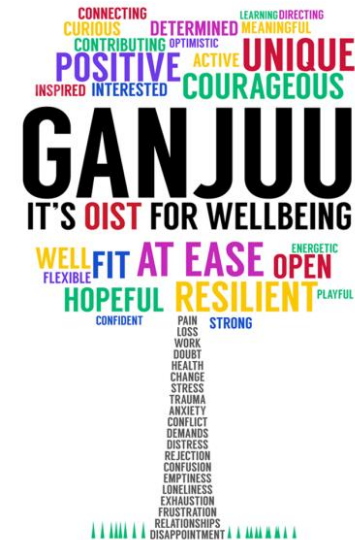


# PD1:

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Wellbeing for Students  
Friday 10th May 2024:  
10:00-12:00  
Ganjuu Wellbeing Service



# Aims

- Introduce the Ganjuu Wellbeing Service
  - What is wellbeing and why is it important?
- The PhD Journey
  - Hopes and fears exercise
  - Student wellbeing
- What is stress and the effects of chronic stress on the body and mind
- Evidence based ways to manage and reduce stress and improve wellbeing.
- Common challenges
- Support services available
- Q&A



# Icebreaker exercise



# Okinawa survival!!





# Sit down if...

## You prefer winter to summer



# Sit down if...

## Your favourite fruit is mango



**Sit down if...**  
**You don't like goya**





# Sit down if...

## You have always lived in a big city





**Sit down if...**

**You don't really like the beach**



**Sit down if...**

**Humidity affects your hair in a bad way**

**IS IT HUMID TODAY?**





**Sit down if...**  
**You don't like sushi**





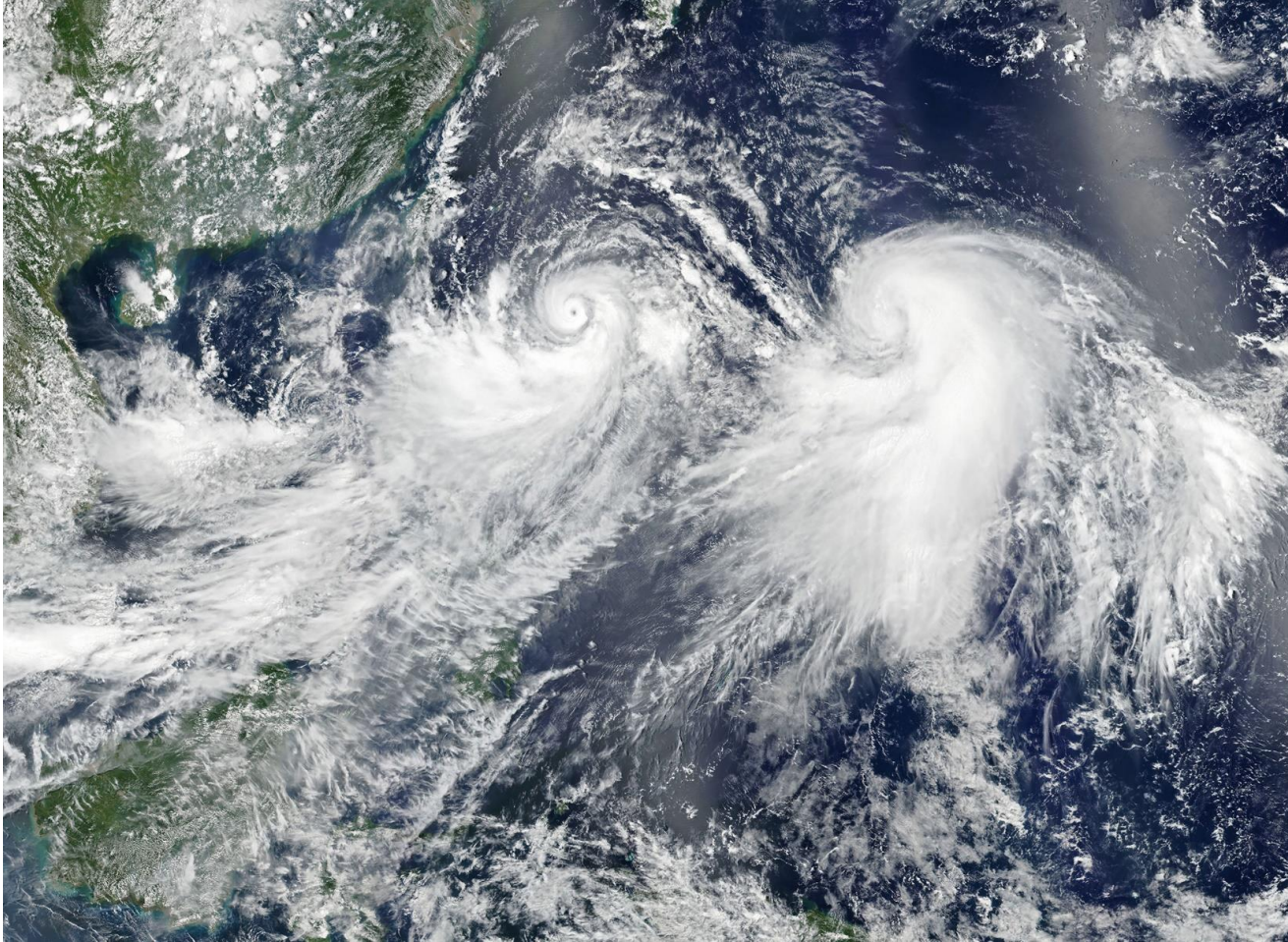
# Sit down if...

## You're scared of snakes



# Sit down if...

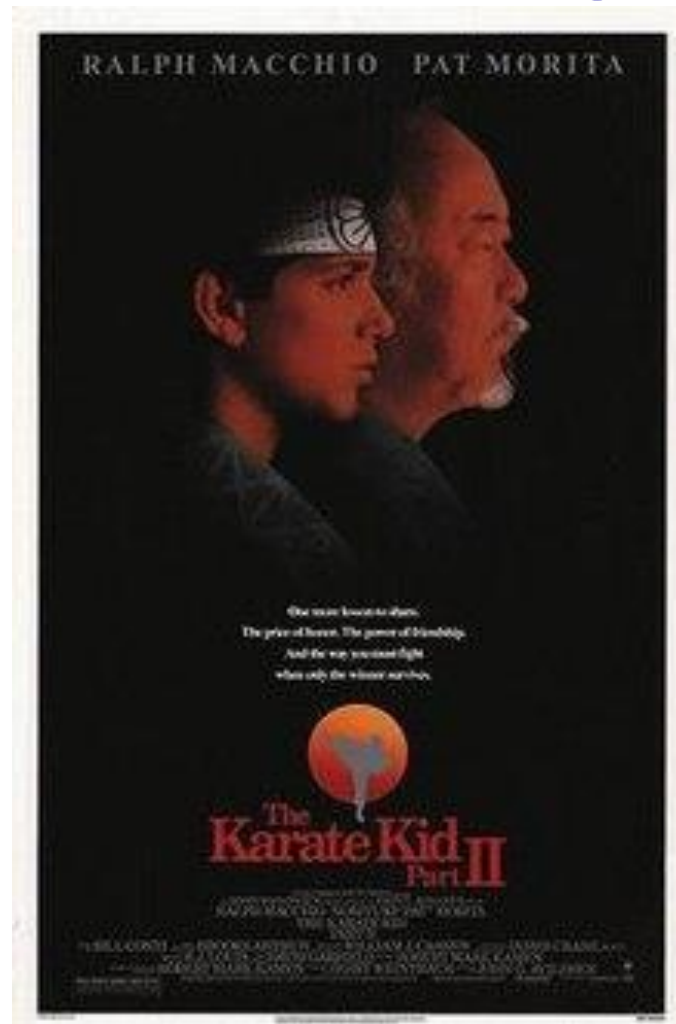
## You have never experienced a typhoon





Sit down if...

You think Karate Kid 2 (the original) is filmed in Okinawa





# What do we mean by wellbeing and why is it important?



# What is wellbeing?

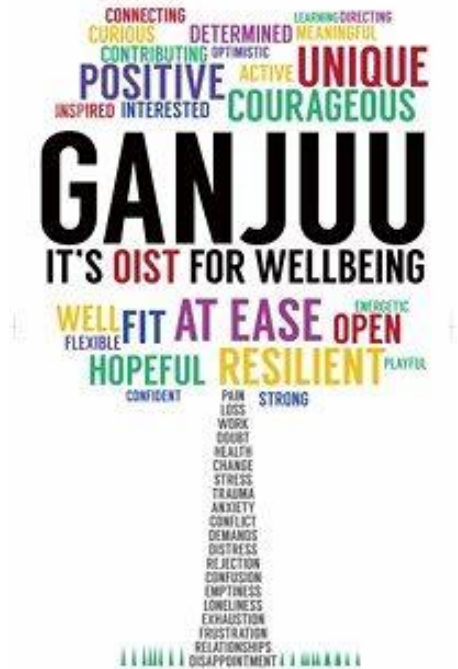


# What is the Ganjuu Wellbeing Service?

Ganjuu is an Okinawan word meaning “strong, healthy, and well.”

The service aims to:

- Enhance the wellbeing in the OIST Community and the organization as a whole
- Reduce stress and promote wellbeing
- Support learning, training, and development



The Ganjuu Wellbeing Service is designed to help you get the most out of your time at OIST.



# What services do we provide?


The services are free and are available to the whole OIST community:

## **Advice, support & psychological therapy**

- Confidential advice & psychological therapy for a range of issues that may impact on wellbeing.
- We work with individuals, couples, families/children and teams.

## **Developing wellbeing in the OIST community and the organization as a whole**

- We are keen to work with members of the OIST community to promote wellbeing or address barriers that may exist.



There are a broad range of reasons why people visit us. We are happy to meet informally if you are unsure whether we are the right service for you.

# Services continued...

## Personal Development

- Develop new skills that enhance your personal and professional development.

## Workshops

- To promote learning, personal development, and wellbeing.
- Interesting and helpful seminars and activities.
- We are open to new ideas!

## Resources

- Wellbeing library of books and materials.
- Useful resources: <https://groups.oist.jp/ganjuu/external-wellbeing-resources>

Feel free to drop by and check a book out of our library.



# Confidentiality





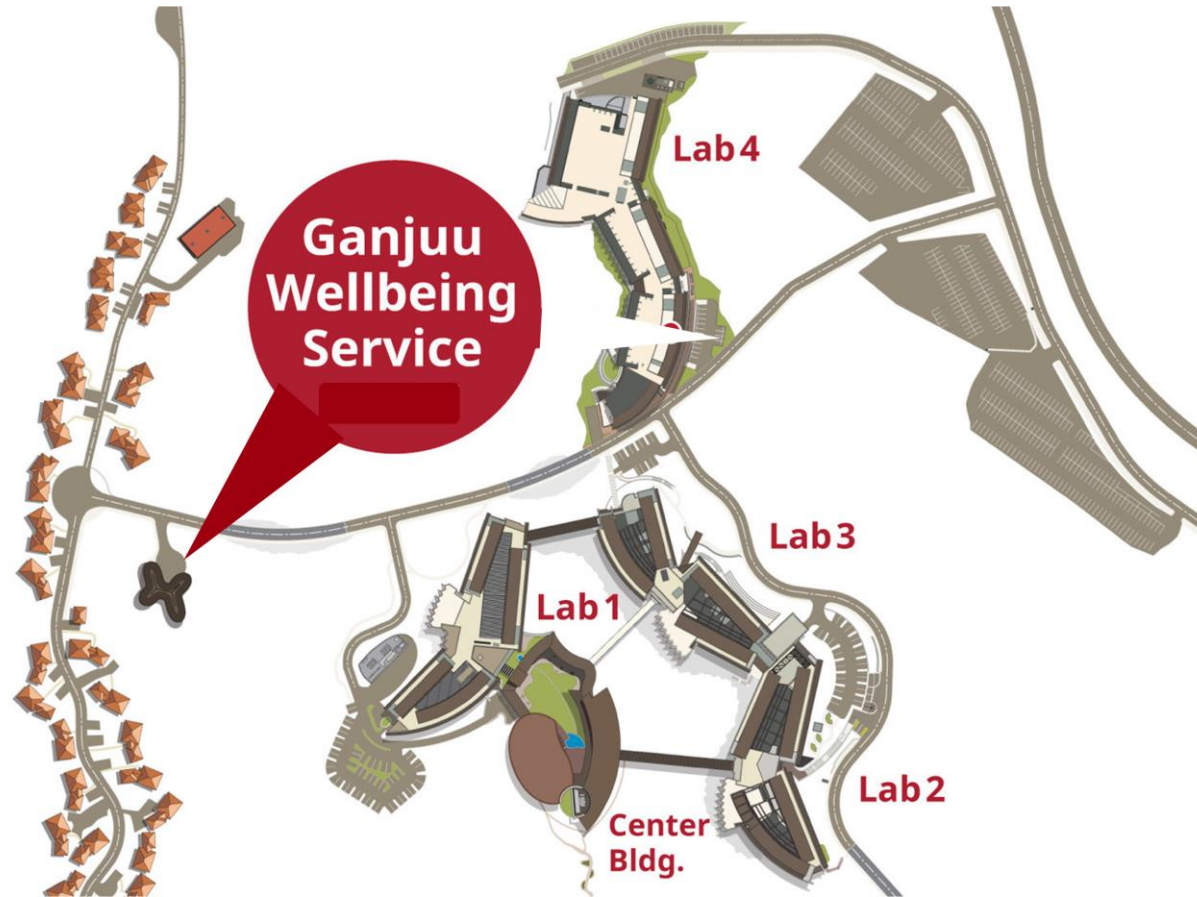
# The Ganjuu Staff



- Kaori Itokazu – Counsellor
- Hayley Rose – Clinical Psychologist
- Sue Lee – Certified Public Psychologist

Services are available in both Japanese and English.

# Ganjuu Wellbeing Service: Location and Hours



The Ganjuu Wellbeing Service is near Lab 5 and Faculty Housing.  
It is open weekdays from 9:00 – 17:00.





# What it looks like inside



# Contact Information

Email ganjuu@oist.jp

Phone 098-982-3327

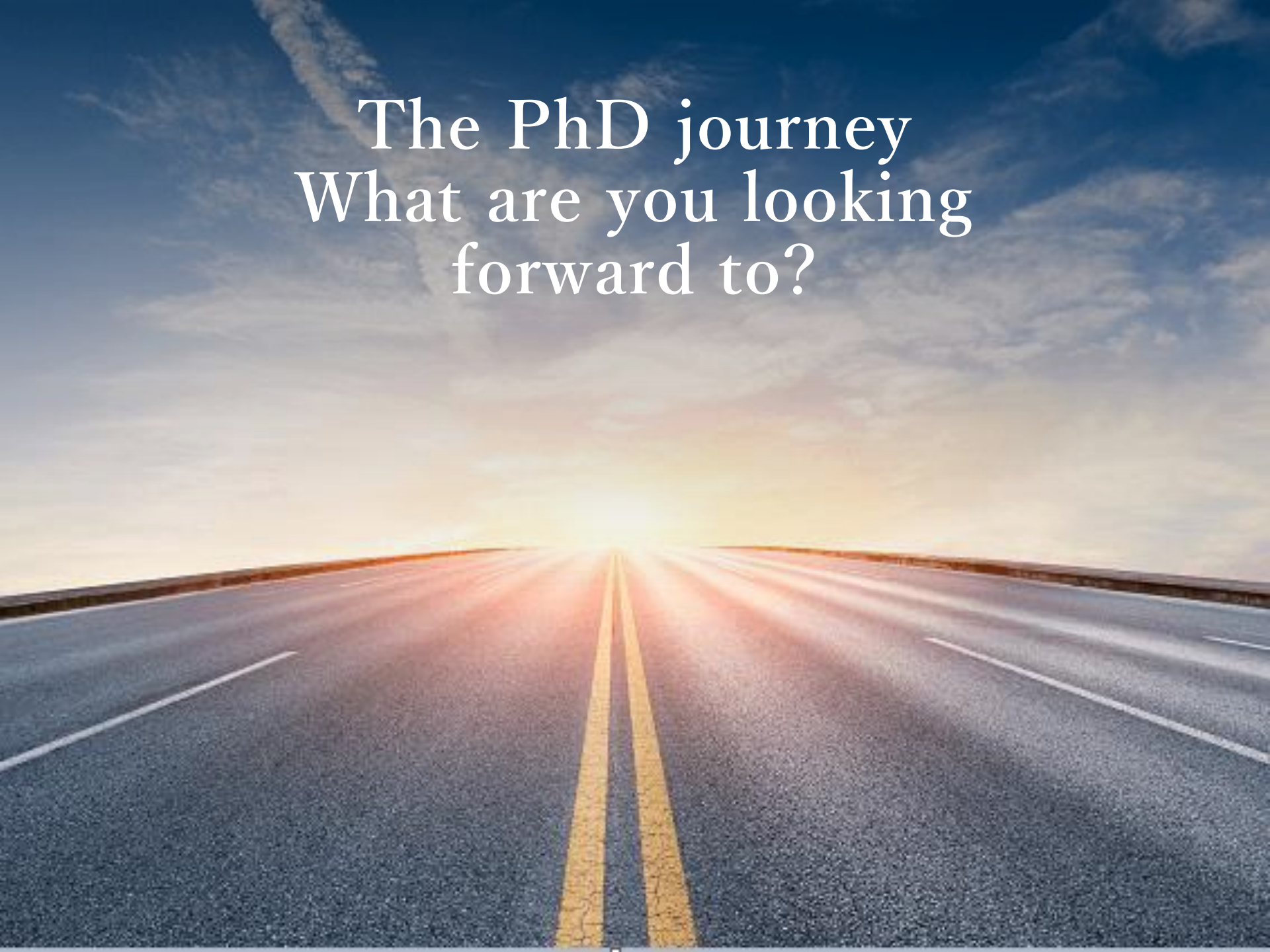
Website <https://groups.oist.jp/ganjuu/>

Wellbeing Resources <https://groups.oist.jp/ganjuu/external-wellbeing-resources>

Location and hours Hillside 3/09  
Monday – Friday, 9:00 – 17:00



The PhD journey  
What are you looking  
forward to?



What do you think  
will be challenging?



# Student wellbeing

- A love-hurt relationship (Nature, 2017)
- Science PhD students love what they do but suffer for it!
- High level of satisfaction with programs but significant worry and uncertainty.

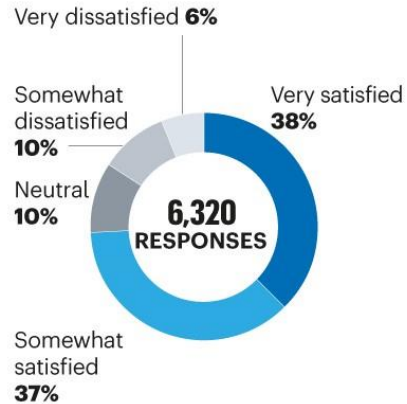


# Nature 2019

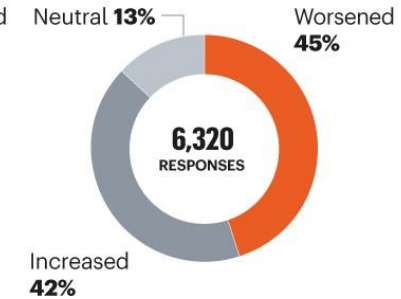
## SUSTAINED SATISFACTION

A majority of respondents are still glad they decided to pursue a PhD, although the attitudes of some have worsened over time.

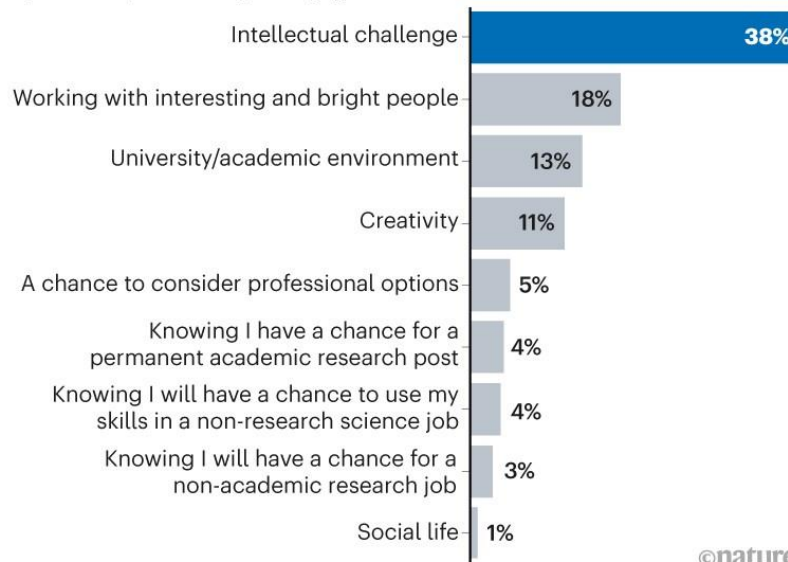
**Q: How satisfied are you with your decision to pursue a PhD?**



**Q: Since the start of your graduate school experience, has your level of satisfaction increased, worsened or remained the same?**

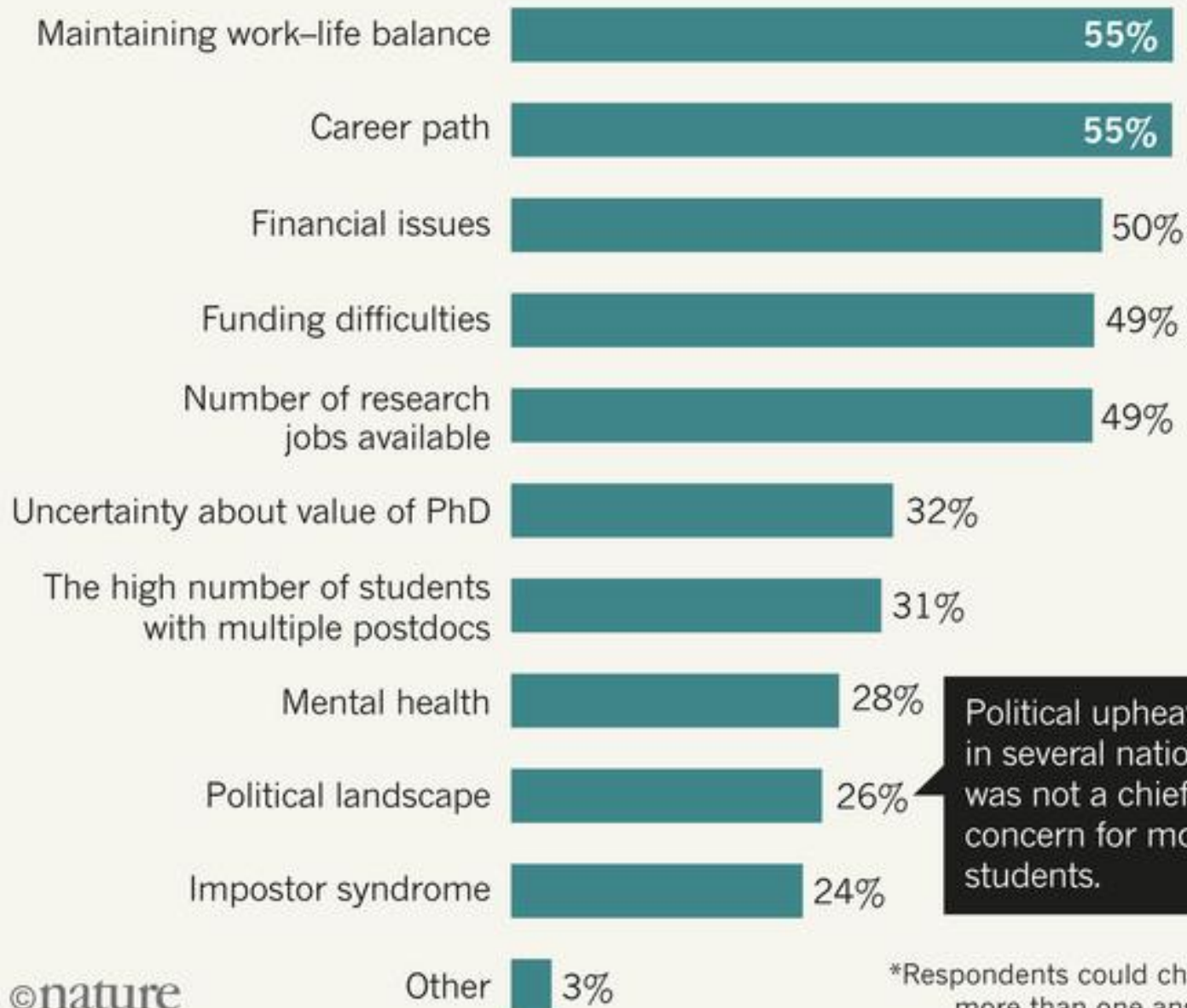


**Q: Overall, what do you enjoy most about life as a PhD student?**





**Q** What are you most concerned about since starting your PhD?\*



Political upheaval in several nations was not a chief concern for most students.

\*Respondents could choose more than one answer.

# What is Stress?



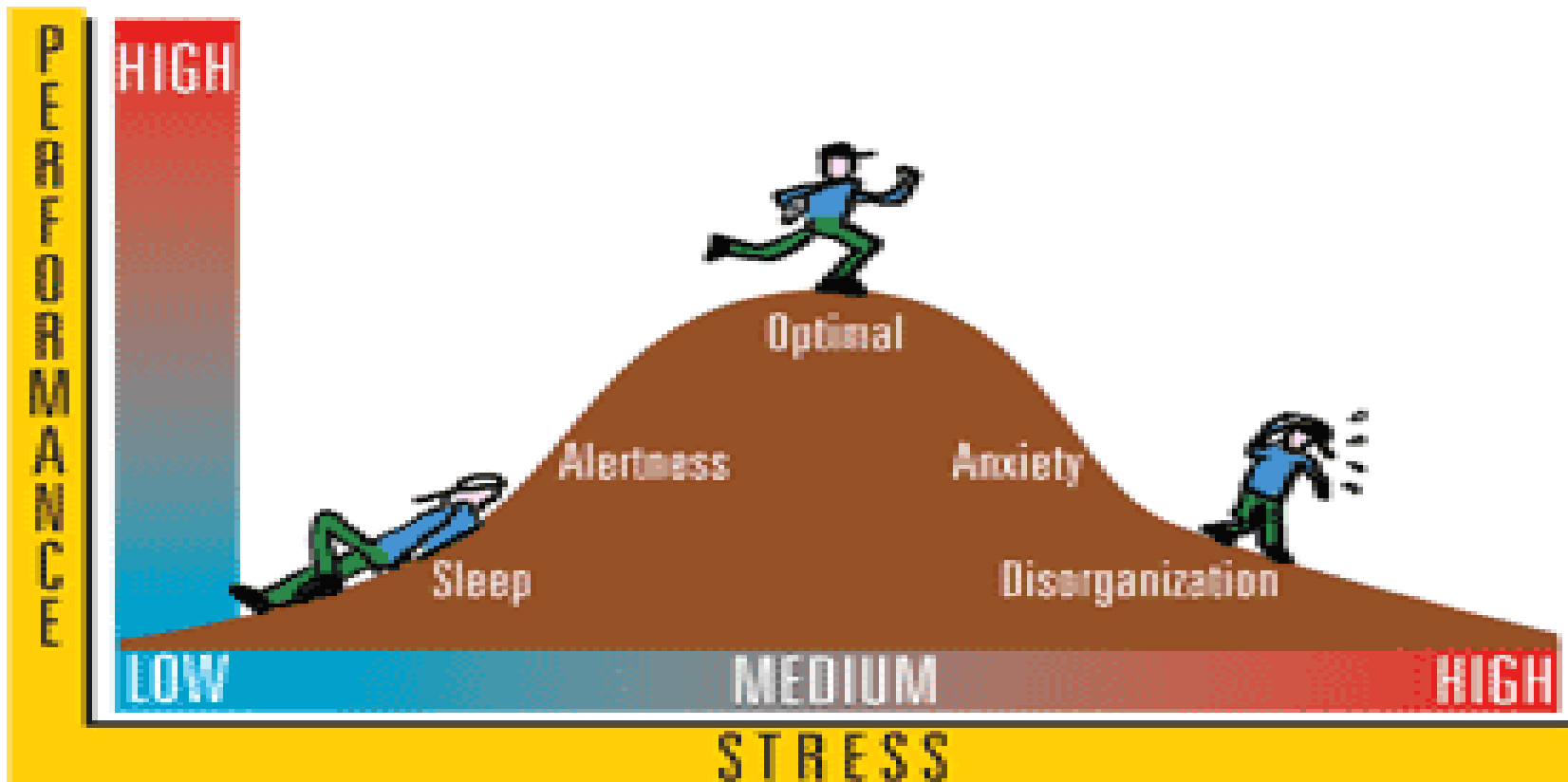
The adverse reaction people have to excessive pressure or other types of demands placed on them.

Distinction between stress and stressor

# Is Stress Good or Bad

## The Yerkes-Dodson Law

Stress Performance Connection





Everything else

Stress  
seems to  
be the  
new norm



# The Problem

Chronic stress is **highly**  
**damaging** to our health and  
wellbeing



# THREAT

## BODY RESPONDS

Release of hormones

# LEE



# FIGHT



# Fight-or-Flight Response

## IMMUNE SYSTEM

- Is repressed

## HEART

- Beats faster
- Pumps more blood
- Blood pressure rises
- Blood increases to muscles
- Blood decreases to organs

## ENDOCRINE SYSTEM

- Pumps out adrenaline, noradrenaline & cortisol
- Noradrenaline constricts blood vessels
- Releases less growth hormone
- Produces fewer sex hormones

## LUNGS

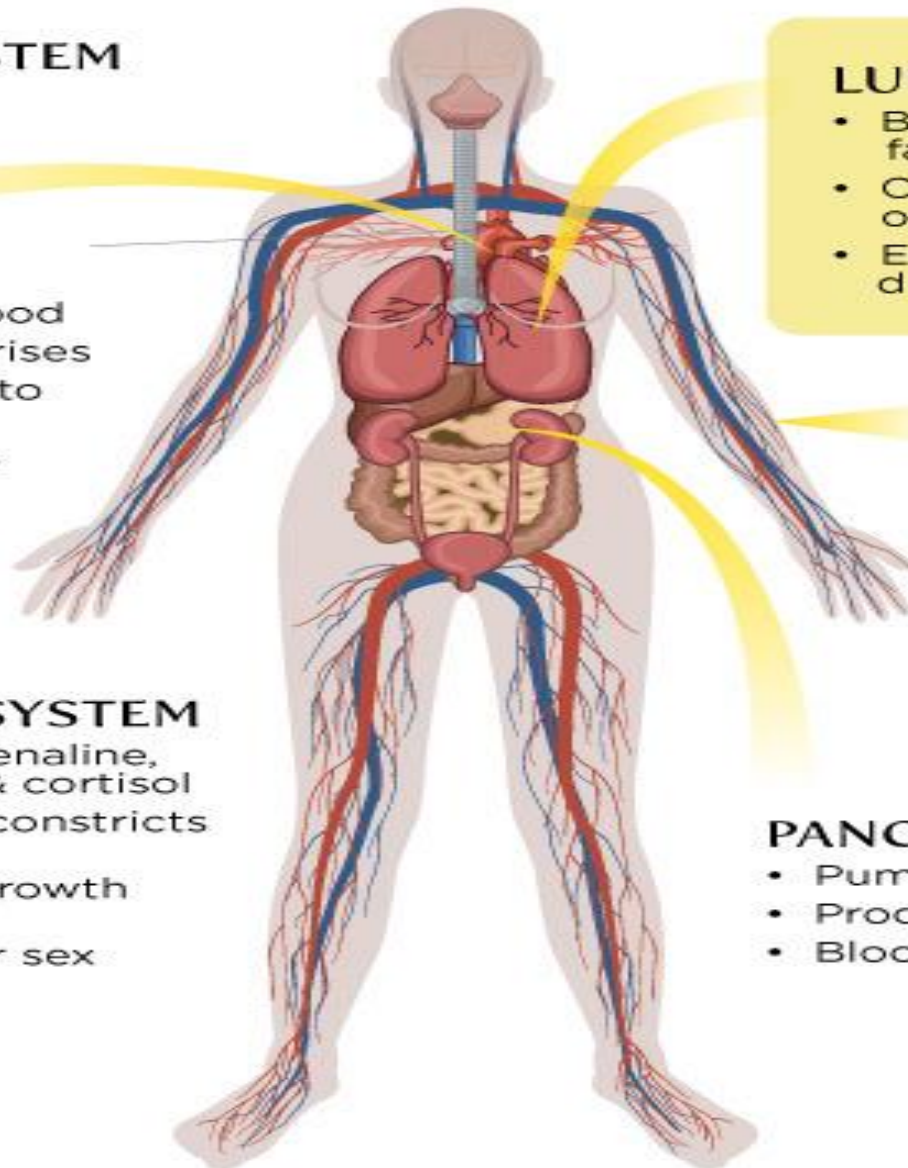
- Breathing becomes faster & shallower
- Consume more oxygen
- Expel more carbon dioxide

## SKIN

- Sweating begins

## PANCREAS

- Pumps out glucagon
- Produces less insulin
- Blood sugar level rises





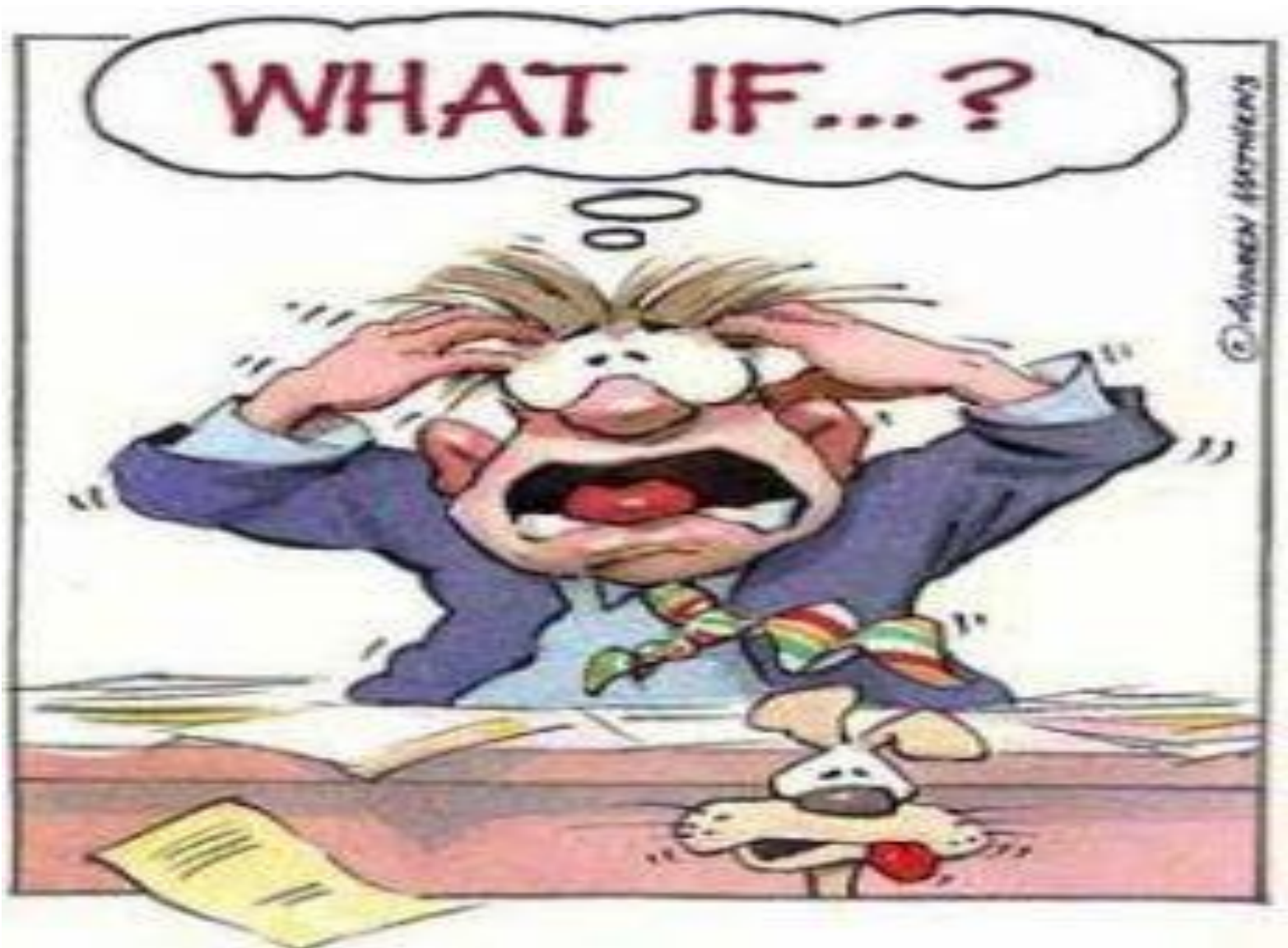


# Limitations of the Fight or Flight (Stress) Response

The fight or flight response prepares the body for a battle of epic proportions even over events as simple as a misplaced set of car keys!



# Worry



# Individual Consequences of Chronic Stress

## Psychological

- Anxiety
- Depression
- Low self-esteem
- Sleeplessness
- Frustration
- Family problems
- Burnout



## Behavioral

- Excessive smoking
- Substance abuse
- Accident proneness
- Appetite disorders
- Violence

## Physiological

- High blood pressure
- Muscle tension
- Headaches
- Ulcers, skin diseases
- Impaired immune systems
- Musculoskeletal disorders
- Heart disease
- Cancer



# Ways to Manage Stress & Improve Wellbeing

## #1: BREATHE!!!

- Beneficial results are immediately obvious
- Can be done any place, any time
- Turn the stress response off!
- Relaxation exercise resources

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qN28VLYpCUc>

Belly breathing

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j-1n3KJR1I8>

Controlled breathing 4-7-8



# Ways to Manage Stress & Improve Wellbeing

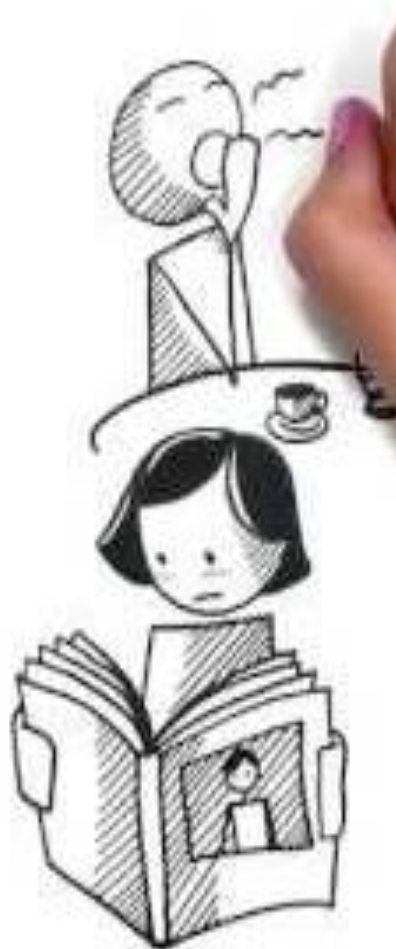
## #2: Change your thinking style

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- Our Perception of a situation has huge bearing on the amount of stress we feel.
- We spend a lot of time thinking about the past or future and make a range of errors in our thinking.
  - Become aware of your self-talk
  - Recognise thinking errors
  - Challenge unhelpful thinking
  - Promote and practice positive self-talk
  - Develop a list of positive affirmations



# Common Thinking Errors



# Imposter Syndrome

HOW DID I  
GET HERE

WHY IS  
EVERYONE ELSE  
SO SMART

THEY'LL  
FIND ME  
OUT

WHAT IS  
MY LIFE

DID I FILL  
A QUOTA

IT'S ALL  
OVER

THIS WAS  
A MISTAKE

WHEN  
WILL THEY  
EXPEL ME

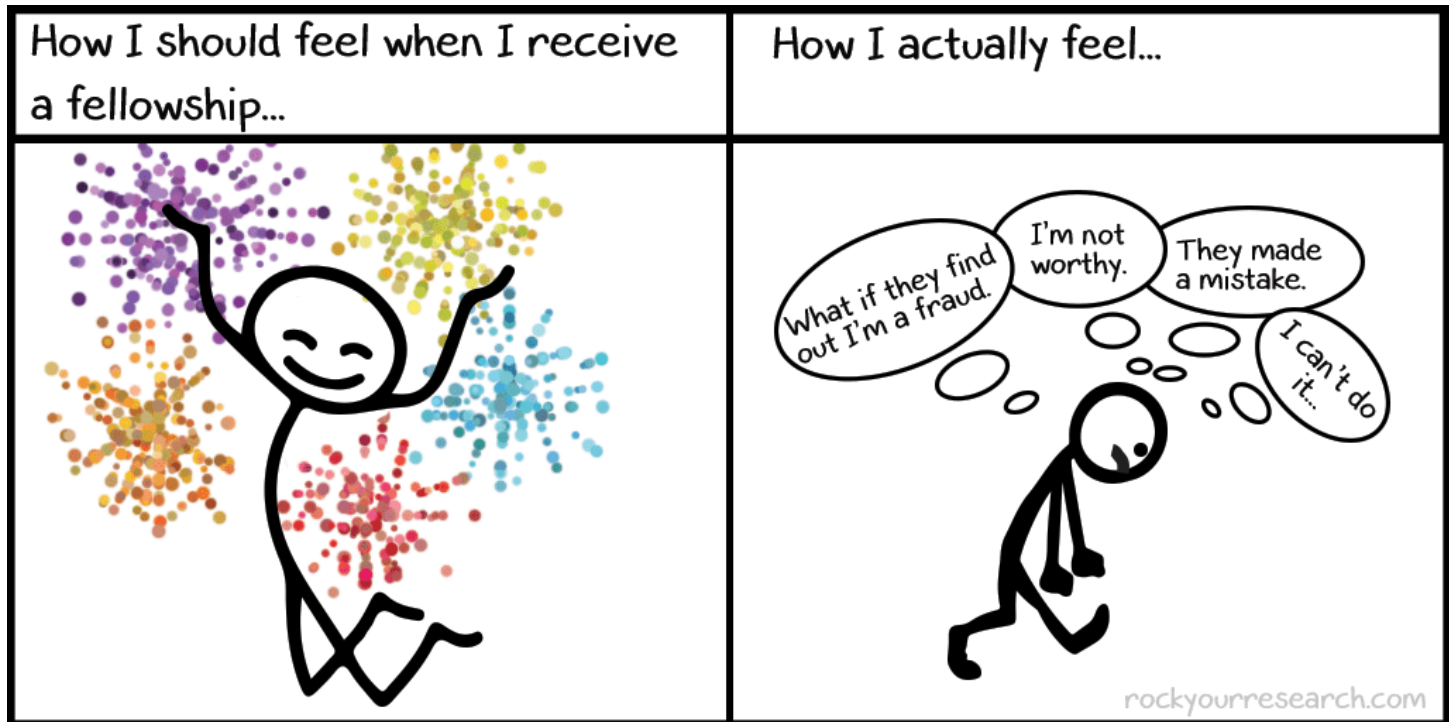
WHO AM I



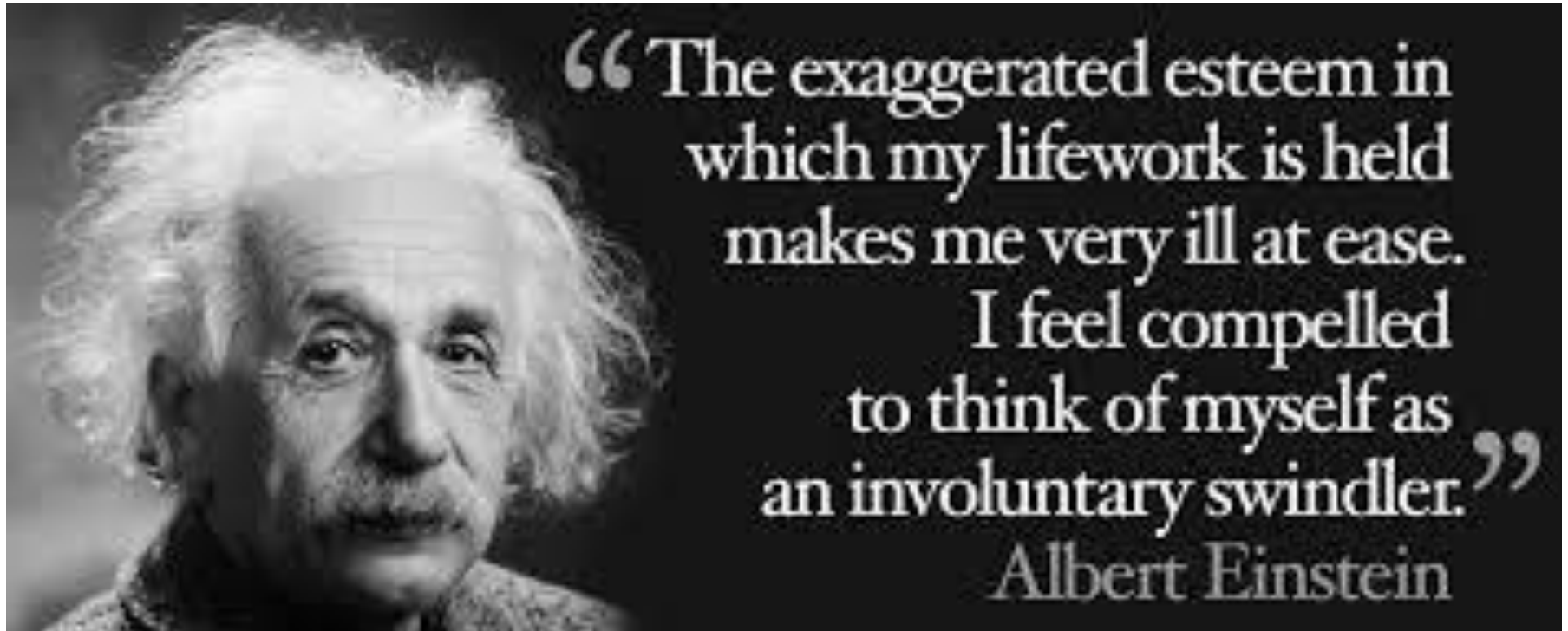


# What is Imposter Syndrome?

- A collection of feelings of inadequacy that persist despite evident success.



# A perception or reality?



“The exaggerated esteem in which my lifework is held makes me very ill at ease. I feel compelled to think of myself as an involuntary swindler.”  
Albert Einstein

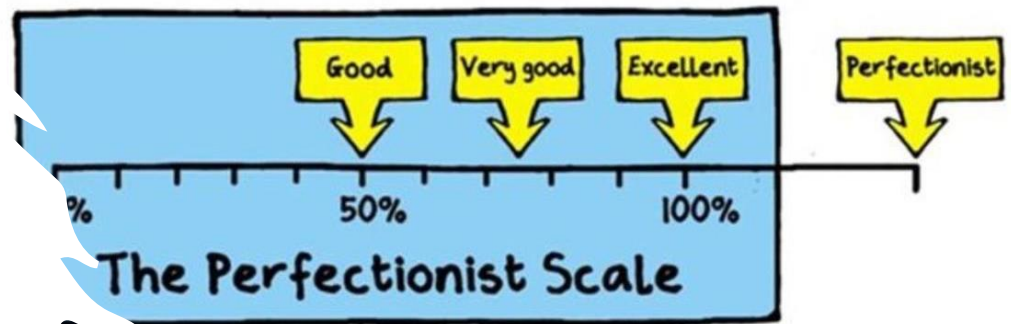
# What can I do to help Imposter Syndrome?



- Recognize imposter feelings when they emerge
- Rewrite your mental programs
- Talk about your feelings
- Consider the context
- Reframe failure as a learning opportunity
- Be kind to yourself
- Seek support
- Visualize success

# Health Striving vs Perfectionism

- High standards vs impossible high
- Balanced approach/  
Unrelenting pursuit
- Perfect vs good enough
- Self-worth tied to success





# Ways to Manage Stress & Improve Wellbeing

## #3: Recognise and Accept Personal Limits

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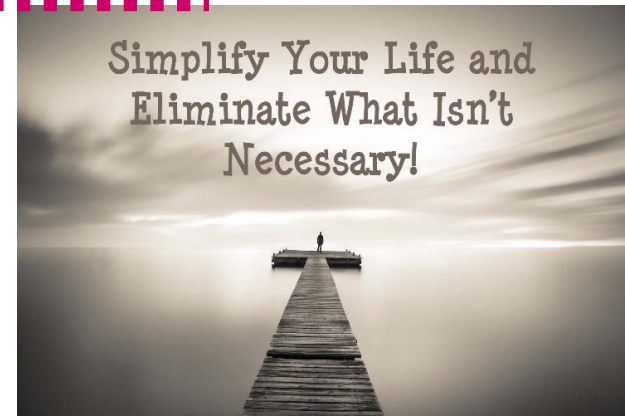
- Be realistic
- Go Easy on criticism
- Take time off
- Work life balance



## #4: Simplify your life

---

- Develop and use planning skills
- Do one thing at a time



# Multitasking experiment

- Multi-tasking is a myth!
- We don't multi-task but instead continuously shift attention when trying to do two things at once.



# Multitasking experiment

## Round 1 instruction

### Round 1:

You will attend to two different cognitive tasks **at the same time**.

- **Task 1**: For the first task, grab a sheet of paper and a pen. You will be writing a story. Your story can be about anything: How your day was, “The Three Little Pigs,” anything.

# Multitasking experiment

## Round 1 instruction

- **Task 2**: While performing task one, you will have another simple task: Count backwards in increments of “1” from 200 to 1. 200, 199, 198. And, do so **out loud**.



# Multitasking experiment

## Round 2 Instruction

### Round 2:

You will attend to **one task at a time**. You will spend 30 seconds on task one. Then, I will announce for you to switch and spend 30 seconds on task 2.

- **Task 1**: You will once again write a story. Please make your story about something different than in round 1.

# Multitasking experiment

## Round 2 Instruction

- **Task 2**: Count backwards from 200 for 30 seconds.

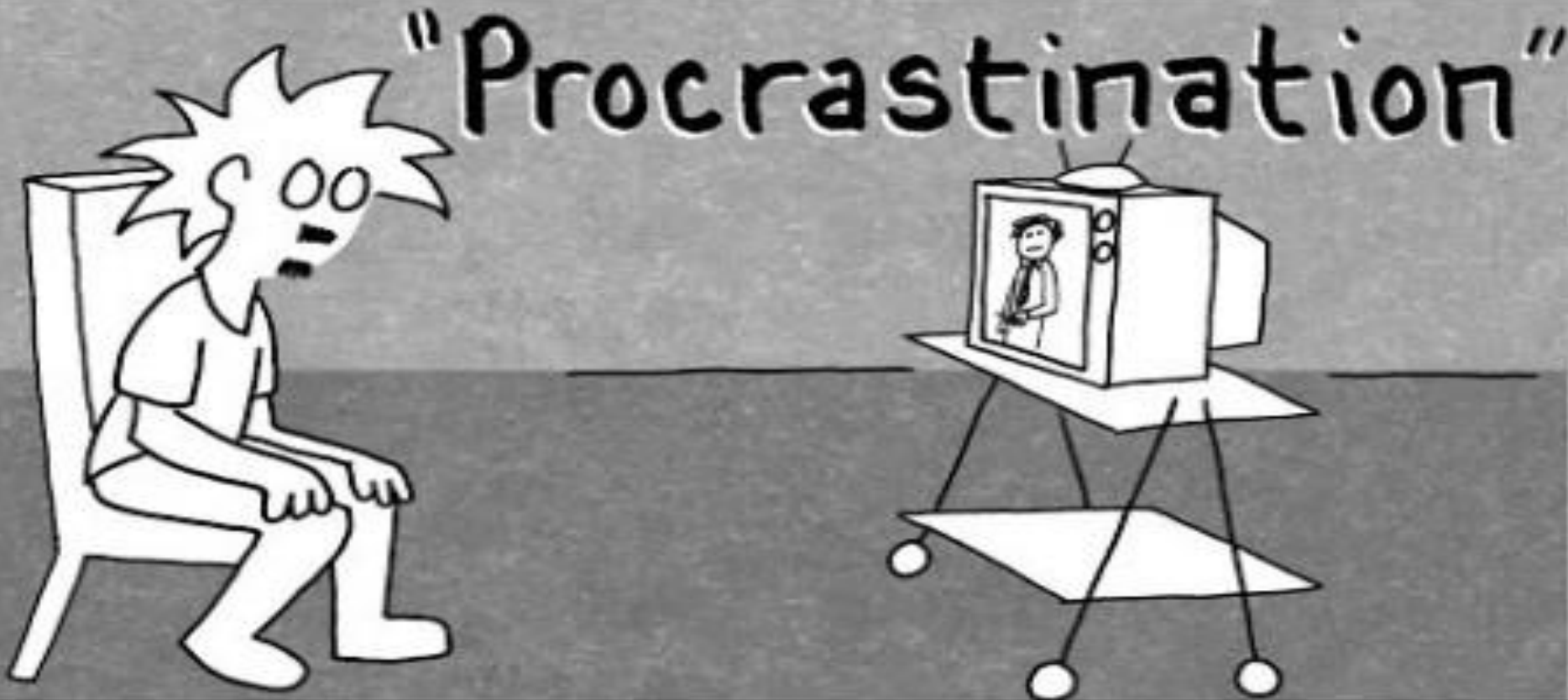
PROCRASTINATORS:

LEADERS OF  
TOMORROW



# Procrastination

“Procrastination is when we voluntarily put off our original intention to work despite expecting to be worse off.”





# Pair Discussion – Procrastination

What are some of things you put off and procrastinate on?  
What do you do when you are not doing what you intended to do?



# Top Tips to address procrastination

- **What do I need to**

- **Prioritising**
- Schedule / To do list
- Chunks
- Telling the time

- **Getting it done**

- Self monitoring
- Worst first
- Momentum
- Just 5 minutes
- Set time limit
- Prime time / prime place
- Reminders
- Plan rewards

Telling someone

Visualize

Remember then do

Focus

Reconnecting with values

Making room for emotions

Challenge excuses

Encourage / don't criticize

# Ways to Manage Stress & Improve Wellbeing

## #5: Think about your body

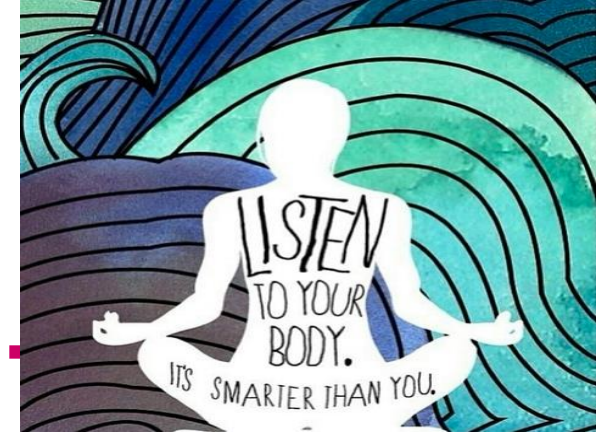
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- Exercise regularly
- Eat healthy
- Get enough sleep

## #6: Take notice / Mindfulness

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- Mindfulness and meditation
- Paying attention
- Being in present moment
- Non judging / accepting



# Mindfulness Exercises

- Short Guided Mindfulness exercise



Mind Full, or Mindful?



# Ways to Manage Stress & Improve wellbeing

## #7: Connect with others

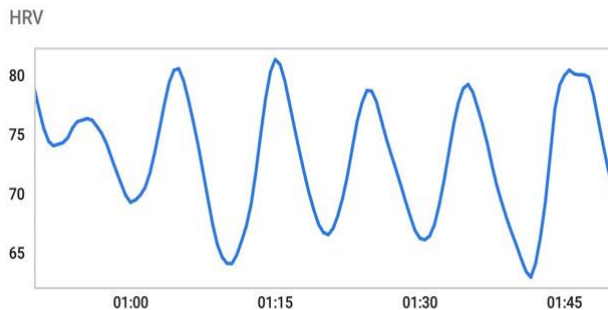


- Humans are social species
- Builds a sense of wellbeing and belonging.
- Opportunities to give and receive support.
- Lots of ways in which we can make a deliberate effort to connect with others.



# Resources

- Ganjuu library & website
- Biofeedback
- <https://groups.oist.jp/ganjuu/external-wellbeing-resources>



# Resources Cont.

- **Apps: Relaxation & Meditation** (can be downloaded at Google Play)



**Plum Village:** Zen Guided Meditation & Mindfulness (Free to download and all the available content is free; offers meditations, talks, & resources)



**Dharma Seed:** (Free to download, with most available content free; offers talks and meditations based on Buddhism from different wellbeing organisations worldwide)



**Insight Timer:** (Free to download, with most available content free; offers meditation, talks, resources, discussion groups – includes a daily check-in tool and meditations specific to aiding sleep)



**Finch: Self-care widget pet** (Free to download, with most available content free, some options for in-app purchases if wanted; take care of your pet by taking care of yourself, through daily check-in's, mindful practices, motivational quotes)

# Resources Cont.

- Self-Help Guide

- Doing what matters in times of stress: an illustrated guide, World Health Organisation (2020) – Available in a range of languages  
<https://apps.who.int/iris/handle/10665/331901>

- Videos:

- Finding Peace in a Frantic World. Educational video focusing on the benefits of mindfulness. (Approx. 60 mins)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AsOUIvQsJ60>

- Exercise and Mental Health (Approx. 3 mins)

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CRuKrB\\_ItH8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CRuKrB_ItH8)

- Audio:

- Compassion informed meditation practices:

<https://balancedminds.com/compassion-focused-therapy-audio/>  
<https://www.compassionatemind.co.uk/resource/audio>





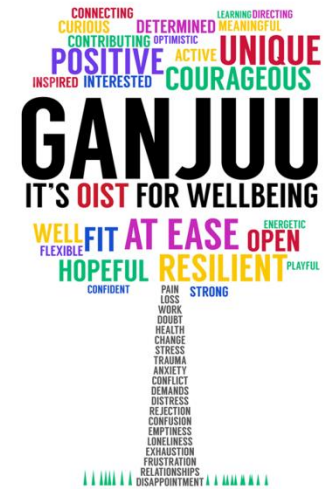
# Resources Cont.

## Access to previous workshops



# Support services available

- Ganjuu Wellbeing Service
- Ganjuu Wellbeing Library
- Health Center/Clinic
- Graduate School
- Local Services
- TELL-Tokyo English LifeLine
- Peer Supporters
- Mentor
- PI
- Ombudsperson



# Thank You – Questions or Reflections

Do you mean to tell  
me a stress ball  
isn't for  
throwing  
at people  
who stress  
you out?

