



ThriveRU Resilience Flash Cards: Building Skills for a Healthy Life

The ThriveRU Resilience Flash Cards are a resource for students, staff, or faculty to use when addressing a specific problem, situation, or area for development. Each card presents a situation and offers strategies to address it, including on-campus resources. Each card belongs to a part of the PERMA-V theory of cultivating happiness and well-being.

The ThriveRU Resilience Cards bring you Ryerson-centred resources and tried-and-true strategies for everything from managing a busy schedule to addressing anxiety to building meaningful relationships and more. If you're handling a particular situation yourself, or are looking for how to help someone, use the cards as a quick way to see effective strategies and connect to Ryerson resources.



PERMA-V: Positivity

Positive emotions are about feeling good and living a pleasant life. We pursue enjoyment because it so rewarding. It is also about our ability to be optimistic about the past, present and future.



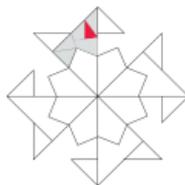
Some elements of crafting Positivity:

- Happiness
- Growth mindset and resilience
- Optimistic thinking style
- Managing emotions



PERMA-V: Engagement

Engagement is about being so engrossed and involved in our activities that we lose sense of time and are completely absorbed by the focus of our attention. Flow can happen in work, play, sports, music, and in our relationships. It stretches us in a multitude of ways and makes life worth living.



Some elements of achieving Engagement:

- Flow and peak performance
- Making good decisions
- Using one's strengths
- Mindfulness training
- Savouring



PERMA-V: Relationships

We all strive for connections and a sense of belonging. We need love and intimacy and we grow from our best relationships.

Finding a calling and living our lives with a sense of purpose is very fulfilling. Knowing that your life has meaning is central to flourishing.



Some elements of building Relationships:

- Making connections
- Kindness, altruism, volunteerism
- Assertive communication
- Forgiveness

PERMA-V: Meaning

Finding a calling and living our lives with a sense of purpose is very fulfilling. Knowing that your life has meaning is central to flourishing.



Some elements of finding Meaning:

- Purpose and passion
- Thinking of work as a calling
- Fulfillment

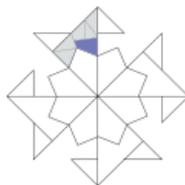


PERMA-V: Accomplishment

Setting goals and achieving them gives us a sense of purpose and satisfaction. We are proud of our achievements and this is deeply connected to well-being.

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Accomplishment



Some elements of pursuing Accomplishment:

- Grit and perseverance
- Self-determination
- Goal setting
- Intrinsic motivation
- Development of good habits
- Hope

PERMA-V: Vitality

Vitality refers to the state of being healthy, strong, active and energized. It is about self-care on the most basic levels.



Some Elements of maintaining Vitality:

- Restorative sleep
- Physical activity
- Balancing work and play
- Healthy eating
- Stress management

Living From A Growth Mindset

A growth mindset encourages you to approach your studies with an open mind and a strong belief that persistent effort can lead to success. With a growth mindset you can enjoy and get more out of your studies, have a newfound appreciation and gratitude for what you are learning, and feel more energized about the future possibilities.



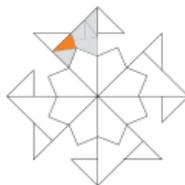
Strategies in using a growth mindset:

- Use curiosity and an open mind when engaged in learning.
- Learning takes effort and willingness to feel stuck at some points.
- Adopt the attitude: “I’m not sure I can do it now, but I think I can learn to with time and effort.”
- Praise yourself for the effort and hard work that you put into a project – it will sustain you over time.



Self-Esteem

Having a healthy, balanced, and accurate self-esteem—how you view and evaluate yourself—encourages you to value your opinions and ideas, feel confident and helps you maintain positive relationships with healthy communication.



Strategies in building and maintaining healthy self-esteem:

- Create a list of your strengths and accomplishments – live according to your strengths (Try the VIA Signature Strengths assessment tool).
- Surround yourself with supportive and caring friends and appreciate these relationships.
- Volunteer for something you care about and share your skills and knowledge with others. This then becomes one of your many accomplishments.



Being Hopeful

Hope is a positive force in our lives that enables us to keep moving forward with optimism and renewed energy. Reminding yourself to renew your sense of hopefulness can decrease levels of stress, helping you feel more optimistic, effective, motivated, and confident.



Strategies to regain a sense of hopefulness:

- Recognize your feelings and try to determine the reason for your feelings.
- Access the supports available on campus such as the Centre for Student Development and Counselling.
- Do something you love, especially if you have stopped these activities recently.
- Try the 5 minute rule: Make a plan and follow it - for at least 5 minutes. You will likely decide to stick with it once you get started, and this gets you engaged and active once again.



Using Mindfulness

Mindfulness is having awareness of our thoughts, emotions and experiences, and accepting them. Mindfulness can help you be more open-minded, focus on the present, manage stress, and feel a state of inner calm and compassion with yourself and surroundings.



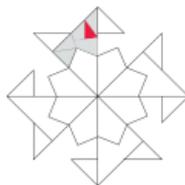
Strategies to use mindfulness to reduce anxiety & stress:

- Look for opportunities to practice mindfulness throughout the day.
- Participate in The Mindfulness and Relaxation Skills group in the Centre for Student Development and Counselling.
- Join a mental wellness peer group for free yoga classes, therapy dogs or mindful walking groups.



Practicing Savouring

Savouring is taking the time to use all your senses to recall a past pleasant experience, to fully engage in the present joys and to imagine a positive future event. This can increase your sense of overall well-being and increases your ability to cope during the hard times.



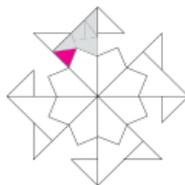
Strategies for “Savouring”:

- Transport yourself! Use your imagination to travel to a place that has always brought you peace or pleasure or comfort.
- Have a list of places that you love and spend the time to recall all aspects of it using all of your senses.
- Go there in your mind when you feel stressed out and need a few minutes to re-charge.



Practicing Acts Of Kindness

Acts of kindness to others increase our own levels of happiness and well-being, giving us a sense of gratification and purpose by shifting the focus from ourselves to others.



Strategies for doing acts of kindness:

- Think of someone who could benefit from your consideration, support or thoughtfulness.
- Consider what they need and then just do it!
- Sending a text to your friend to wish them luck on their exam, volunteering at a local community event or helping a peer with their essay are all examples of small acts of kindness.

Creating A Supportive Environment

Surrounding yourself with supportive people and resources can help you feel more at ease, promotes feelings of confidence through belonging to a community, and you are more likely to lend a hand to others in return, experiencing the benefits of extending support.



Strategies to create a supportive environment:

- Get to know your classmates, neighbors, and co-workers.
- Join groups on campus of interest to you with peers who are like-minded.
- Form study groups with peers and support each other.
- Make an attempt to meet your professors during office hours.
- Make time in your schedule for friends and family.

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Respecting Others' Beliefs

Not everyone you meet will hold the same values and beliefs as you, but it is important to respect them anyway, despite your differences; this increases your compassion for others.



Strategies to respect other's beliefs:

- Show respect when you meet others whose values differ from your own.
- Know your own beliefs and values through personal reflection.
- Be curious about others and ask questions in a respectful and open-minded way.
- Model respect – “Treat others how you wish to be treated”.

Managing Relationships With Conflict

Any relationship may eventually experience some kind of conflict; learning to communicate assertively and manage these situations can reduce anxiety and increase focus on other aspects of life, enrich your relationships, and build confidence in your ability to manage complex situations.



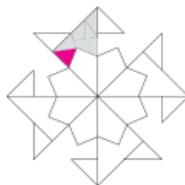
Strategies to manage challenging relationships:

- Try to resolve conflicts through compromise.
- Consider and respect the other person's perspective.
- Use "I" statements when communicating and be clear about your needs.
- Learn assertiveness strategies to hold your ground without engaging in arguments.
- Get relationship help from the Centre for Student Development and Counselling.



Develop Your Cross-Cultural Skills

Developing your cross-cultural skills allows you to stay open-minded, teaches you acceptance and inclusion, and enriches your life by learning about different worldviews.



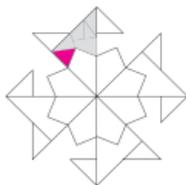
Strategies to develop our cross-cultural skills:

- Be open-minded and appreciative of diversity.
- Challenge your assumptions or your discomfort around the unknown.
- Be aware of how your individual culture influences how you perceive others.
- Be curious and look for opportunities to learn new things.
- Participate in cultural events on campus and cultural festivities across Toronto.



Meeting New People And Friends

Developing healthy relationships with others helps you create new experiences, form supporting social networks, expands your worldviews, and increases your well-being.



Strategies to meet new people and friends:

- Sign up for courses/activities that genuinely interest you.
- Take up offers that come your way and look for new experiences.
- Look for Student Groups that interest you; Volunteer on or off campus.
- Be assertive and friendly by smiling, introducing yourself and being open to meeting others.
- Sign up for courses/activities that genuinely interest you.
- Take up offers that come your way and look for new experiences.
- Volunteer in activities on and off campus.

Living An Eco-Friendly Lifestyle

Living an eco-friendly lifestyle contributes to the creation and maintenance of a sustainable community, making you feel a part of a community that shares your values, and giving you a sense of gratification for doing your part.



Strategies to living an eco-friendly lifestyle:

- Use a bike and/or walk
- Recycle plastic, paper and glass.
- Print less, try reading online or sharing reading materials with classmates.
- Try adding a new eco-friendly technique every month.

Reflecting On Your Beliefs

Reflecting on your own beliefs and values allows you to become more spiritually-aware and have a better understanding of yourself. You can experience increased compassion and understanding for others, be more open-minded, and feel confident in making a first impression.



Strategies for reflecting on your own beliefs:

- Spend time thinking about what is important to you and consistent with your values and act on them.
- Participate in activities that connect the mind and body, such as yoga.
- Listen to your creative impulses (i.e. keeping a journal, painting or drawing, or writing poetry).
- Give back by volunteering, helping others or by performing a random act of kindness.

Find Meaning In Your Roles

Finding meaning in the roles you assume in life (from interpersonal roles with friends and family, to professional roles at school and at work) helps you to view these roles as important aspects of your overall identity. Effectively balancing your roles decreases stress and protects against burnout.



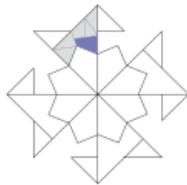
Strategies to effectively juggle roles:

- Be flexible.
- Prioritize personal, social, academic and employment commitments – and act accordingly.
- Try to lead a balanced life through good nutrition, proper sleep and exercise.
- Set time for social/family/relaxation.
- Ask for help if you start to feel overwhelmed or discouraged.X



Managing a busy schedule

When you manage your time effectively, you can keep up with tasks, have increased control over your responsibilities, and decrease your levels of stress.



Strategies to managing a busy schedule:

- Focus on the present moment and what you are able to do – identify priorities and act accordingly.
- Make a list of things over which you have control, and those you don't. Start at the top of the list and work through it till the end.
- Practice 5–10 minutes of mindfulness meditation each day.
- Strive for balance by making time for things you enjoy and for friends and family.
- Join time management workshops offered by Student Learning Support in the SLC

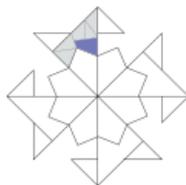


Living Within Your Budget

Budgeting effectively helps you reduce levels of stress, helps you spend your money wisely, and creates budgeting habits and practices that last.

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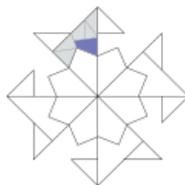
Strategies to stay within your budget:

- Calculate expenses and income and think of ways to stay on budget.
- Avoid debt (if possible, use your debit card or cash instead of a credit card).
- Use campus resources to maintain a reasonable budget for yourself, such as RU Student Life's #RUMoneySmart resources, or Student Financial Assistance.
- Check out the Good Food Centre at Ryerson Student Centre to eat nutritiously on a budget.



Career Planning & Next Steps After Graduation

Thinking about life after graduation helps you reduce anxiety related to transition, increases your optimism, and helps you build your resume with volunteer and extracurricular opportunities.



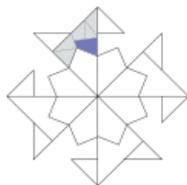
Strategies for career planning and life after graduation:

- Create a list of S.M.A.R.T. goals for yourself, which are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Time-sensitive.
- Reflect on your passions in life and intersect this with possible career options.
- Visit the Career Centre and Centre for Student Development and Counselling as early as possible for advice, educational and career planning.



Reflecting On Your Program Fit

Reflecting on your program fit allows you to discover your own strengths and passions so you can pursue them directly, and prevents further investment in a program that isn't right for you.

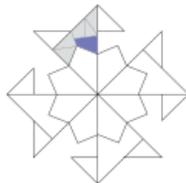


Strategies to manage worries about courses:

- Meet early with an Academic Advisor in your faculty if you have concerns about your degree/program path
- Meet with the professor for the course with which you are having difficulty and discuss your challenges
- Attend Career and Education Related Groups and Workshops offered by the Centre for Student Development and Counselling.

Accepting A Grade With Which You Are Not Satisfied

Receiving a low grade can be hard to accept. Rather than beating yourself up about it, reframing your perspective and viewing this as an opportunity to change your study strategies can help you bounce back.



Strategies to accepting a low grade and learning to move forward successfully:

- Acknowledge what you are feeling and plan a strategy for the future
- Improve your study/writing skills by accessing individual help and/or workshops offered by Student Learning Support in the SLC
- Form study groups with peers
- Evaluate your strengths and weaknesses, we all have them. Try the VIA Strengths Survey to start!
- Make studying a priority and organize your time accordingly

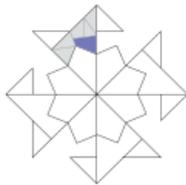


Difficulty Understanding Coursework

Experiencing difficulty understanding your coursework is a common concern; taking the necessary steps to work through the challenge will positively impact your grade and success.

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Strategies for when you have difficulty understanding coursework:

- Meet with your professor during office hours to ask for clarification
- Take advantage of academic support offered on campus
- Form study groups with peers and support each other
- Consider hiring a tutor or find a Ryerson tutor using the Tutor Registry.

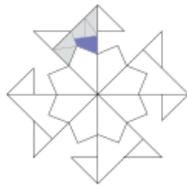


Managing Anxiety Before Exams/ Tests

Managing anxiety is a skill that can be learned, and helps you take back control of your academic success.

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Strategies to manage anxiety before exams:

- Schedule your study time in advance rather than cramming.
- Take advantage of academic support offered on campus.
- Form study groups with peers and support each other.
- Consider hiring a tutor or find a Ryerson tutor using the Tutor Registry.
- Try to be physically and mentally balanced prior to exams by eating nutritious foods, getting enough sleep and being active.
- Meet with your professor during office hours to ask for clarification.

Coping With Stress

Coping with stress effectively and healthily can decrease your risk of health problems, improve your mood and sleep patterns, enhance your focus and concentration, and can give you an increased sense of well-being and zest.



Strategies to coping with stress:

- Be physically active.
- Make sure you get enough sleep.
- Maintain a positive outlook.
- Develop healthy eating habits.
- Surround yourself with positive relationships.
- Try yoga, breathing exercises or meditation.
- Check out campus resources through the Ryerson Athletics Centre.

Finding Time To Be Active

Finding time to be active is an important strategy to cope with all the demands of daily life. Physical activity improves your ability to achieve or maintain a healthy body with enhanced energy, mood, and self-esteem, resulting in improved concentration and lower levels of stress.



Strategies to finding time to be active:

- Set small goals. Go for a quick walk during class or study breaks.
- Take the stairs instead of the escalator or elevator.
- Sign up for a recreation program offered on campus after class.
- Schedule activities with a friend so you can support each other in being active.

Engaging In Safer Sex

Engaging in safer sex promotes healthy relationships with your partners, develops good communication skills, and promotes peace of mind about your relationship and sexual activities.



Strategies to protect yourself during sex:

- Communicate your wish for safe sex clearly and with assertiveness with your partner.
- If you have questions or concerns, meet with a healthcare provider on campus.
- Use contraception such as condoms to prevent the risk of sexually transmitted disease/unwanted pregnancy.
- Make sure you comfortable and feel safe to talk about anything with your sexual partner.

Maintaining Healthy Eating Habits

Eating well is vital to maintaining overall good health, as it gives you more energy and concentration to complete tasks and lowers your risk of developing health problems.



Strategies to eating healthier:

- Make meals in advance.
- Snack on fruits and veggies.
- Eat a balanced and complete breakfast.
- Compare your intake with Canada's Food Guide to help you stay on track.
- Drink 9-12 cups of water/beverages per day to stay hydrated.
- Keep caffeine intake to a minimum (no more than 2 cups a day)
- Meet with one of our dieticians for a food consultation as part of the Student Health Assistance and Resiliency Program (SHARP).

Being Safe When You're At A Bar/Party

Being mindful of your personal safety ensures both you and your belongings stay safe.



Strategies to promote personal security:

- Be aware of who is around you & leave with the same people with whom you came.
- Buy your own drinks and keep your drink in sight at all times.
- Keep condoms and other contraceptives on you when you go out.

Managing The Pressure To Perform Well Academically

Taking the time to manage the pressure you feel to perform well academically lets you take charge of your life and feel in control of your career. You'll find the energy to face internal and external pressures and not become overwhelmed.



Strategies for when you feel pressured to do well academically:

- Take advantage of academic support offered on campus.
- Book an appointment at the Centre for Student Development and Counselling if your level of anxiety is paralyzing you
- Ask friends and family for support.
- Meet early with an advisor if you have concerns about your degree/program path.
- Form study groups with peers and support each other.

Getting Enough Sleep

Your body needs time to recuperate and rest, even as you balance your multiple responsibilities.

Getting enough sleep will improve your focus and memory, boost your immune system, enhance your academic performance, and decrease levels of stress, anxiety, and irritability.



Strategies to fall asleep easier:

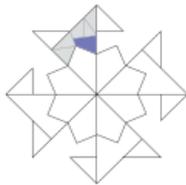
- Go to sleep when you are sleepy.
- Take a warm bath or shower before heading to bed.
- Don't bring your phone/electronics to bed with you.
- Taking deep breaths while in bed.
- Create a good environment for falling asleep.
- Avoid caffeine, alcohol and nicotine for at least 2 hours before bed.
- Set a bedtime and wake up plan.

Student Health Assistance and Resilience Program

Sometimes we need a little help getting on track. The Student Health Assistance and Resilience Program (SHARP) is a Peer Support program designed to help student develop lifelong skills for managing their health and wellbeing through problem solving and personal growth. Our team will guide you through a journey of identifying what you need to know and do, and assist in creating a wellness plan that is fun and achievable.

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Accomplishment



The SHARP Ambassador will:

- Work with you to identify the root cause of your stressors
- Help you formulate an action plan for how to access the right help
- Help you develop your resilience toolbox that you can refer to when things are difficult
- Redirect you to the appropriate service so you get it right the first time
- Provide you self-help resources like the health information card, the transition book, The ThriveRU workbook, and these Resilience Cards

Learn more at:

ryerson.ca/healthandwellness/healthpromotion/sharp/

ryerson.ca/thriveru

SHARP – Turns

A transition is a process or period of change that a person experiences many times in their lifetime. As you go through university you will encounter many changes and events - some small some large, some positive some negative. The trick is to learn how to navigate them all.



Benefits of SHARP-Turns program focus:

- You can apply it to all aspects of life, i.e. personal, academic, career.
- Can improve time management skills.
- Allows you to measure the short and long term successes.
- Makes completing tasks easier and more manageable.
- You'll become more self-driven and self-oriented.

SHARP – Body

Maintaining a healthy body is crucial for academic success and personal development. By taking care of your physical bodies, you allow yourself to reach our maximum potential throughout the day. There are many elements that affect physical health status. The trick is to learn how to navigate them all.



Benefits of SHARP-Body's program focus:

- Improved mood and self-esteem
- Lower stress levels
- Feeling more energized
- Improved ability to focus on tasks like studying and writing
- Increased ability to maintain a healthy weight

SHARP – Mind

Mental health is the complete state of well-being, and not just the absence of disease. Maintaining a positive mental health status as a university student can be difficult because of the many adjustments you make when attending university and the high levels of stress many people face during the semester. The trick is to learn how to navigate them all.



Benefits of SHARP-Mind's program focus:

- Less likely to feel anxious, irritable, sad, or worried
- Can focus on tasks such as academics and work
- An improved ability to remember and retain new information
- An improved immune response, making it easier for your body to fight off illnesses
- Completing tasks, like studying or writing exams, becomes easier

Website: ryerson.ca/healthptomotion/sharp

SHARP – RU

When something in life doesn't go the way you plan, what do you do? How do you react to the change? How do you feel?

Resilience is the ability to recover and respond to change—to “bounce back” and move on through life as well as before.



Benefits of SHARP-RU's program focus:

- Self-driven and self-oriented.
- Improve your health literacy
- Build your resilience
- Build your personal health knowledge and capacity
- Develop healthy habits
- Can improve time management skills
- Allows you to measure the short and long term successes
- Makes completing tasks easier and more manageable
- Can focus on tasks such as academics and work

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ryerson.ca/thriveru