

# Teaching Connections Podcast

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**Episode** 11

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**Title:** Perspectives on Mental Well-being in NUS:  
A Panel Discussion (Part 3)

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In this episode, we are pleased to have a panel comprising current NUS students and recent NUS alumni, all of whom are passionate about issues related to mental well-being:

- Tasneem Abdul Majeed, Year 3 Psychology/Faculty of Arts & Social Sciences (FASS), Autism Advocate, and “Beyond the Label” Mental Health Ambassador
- KHOO Yi Feng, Class of 2017, Southeast Asian Studies/FASS, Social Worker (Youth Mental Health) with [Limitless\\*](#)
- LIM Wei Jie, Class of 2017, Psychology/FASS, Founder of [Foreword Coffee](#)

During this conversation, they will share their personal mental well-being stories, how these have impacted their student experiences at NUS, and the ways in which one can maintain one’s mental well-being in order to have an enriched student learning experience.

This episode is chaired by Dr Lee Li Neng, Associate Director of the Centre for Development of Teaching and Learning (CDTL).

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\* [Limitless](#) is a non-profit org which provides mental health support and therapy for youths aged 12-25, as well as public education and training for youths, parents, educators, and helping professionals.

\*\* [Foreword Coffee](#) is a social enterprise that seeks to empower persons with intellectual disabilities through training + employment in specialty coffee industry)

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## **Intro Music & Voiceover**

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In the third and concluding part of this episode, our guests share 1-2 key things they found helpful to their mental wellbeing as students and enabled them to have an enriched university learning experience.

This episode is chaired by Dr Lee Li Neng, Associate Director of the Centre for Development of Teaching and Learning (CDTL).

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## **Part 3: Maintaining Your Mental Well-being – What You Can Do**

**LLN (00:53):** We'll end [this episode] with this because we have been talking for quite a while. Now, if there are freshmen entering NUS this Academic Year. For these freshman, they're coming back, and the great thing is we're seeing them back on campus now, right? Face-to-face orientations [are] finally back. Now, what are one to two things that you will tell them in terms of helping them to maintain their well-being while they are students here, especially in these four years that they are here: what would be some advice you [would] want to give to them? Maybe we start with Wei Jie and Yi Feng, and we end with Tas.”

**(01:32)**

**WJ:** “All right...well, I mean, to re-live my first years in NUS, it [was an] exciting experience and I also attended many, many orientation camps, get to know people[sic] and all that. And I think one of the thing is, yeah, it's really to **manage your energy well, know yourself well**. In fact, why I even choose[sic] Psychology is because I want to get to know the human psyche, to know myself ever better and to manage myself even better. I think when you learn to master yourself, that's where you know, you know you're better able to manage your well-being.

And I think another point is to maybe consciously tell yourself, reduce that social comparisons, yeah, and learn to be more contented with what we have. I think this helped me a lot in my four years, and even now in the working world. **practicing gratitude** and things like that. These may not come to you when you are younger, you know, but if there was someone to tell you about this, and you want to explore this power of, you know—**knowing yourself better, managing [your] energy, [and] practicing gratitude**—this is something that I will share with people.”

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**LLN:** “Thank you so much, Wei Jie. I think this is really very good advice, because again, this is something that we don't always talk about, right, when it comes to education.

Now, what about Yi Feng and Tas? Yi Feng has [had] two times of [university] experience, being educated here in NUS. What kind of advice would you give to freshmen entering? What is one to two things that you will tell them, that you want them to learn?

**(03:10)**

**YF:** “Wow, well...Li Neng, as I look back towards my younger self, and this will be what I say to my younger self, so I'll say this in the first-person voice:

**To be my best, I need my rest. My worth is not defined by my grades or work. I'm worthy, period.**

And that's from me.”

**LLN:** “See, pieces of wisdom coming from this person.

And we have Tas. Now, I think your voice is the nearest one to students that they can hear. And they may think, you know, Yi Feng and Wei Jie have graduated already, they do not understand us, now, students who are going through things, for example. What would you say to them, right? What are one to two things you will say to freshmen who are coming in now [on] how to keep and maintain their wellbeing in this time?”

**(04:07)**

**Tas:** “Thanks, Dr. Lee. Interestingly enough, like what Wei Jie and Yi Feng mentioned [are] extremely relevant to whatever I'm experiencing now. But if I were to give, maybe I'll just give three quick tips.

So I would say number one—this might be a bit objective and a little bit of a harsh reality check—but **manage your expectations**. Because when it comes to university, you are learning alongside people of a certain academic calibre, well, at least in terms in terms of academic performance. So your peers will have like both an attitude and aptitude for higher learning, and you must remember that. So when that happens, you may not always get the grade you want, or the leadership position, or the job opportunity, or the award or scholarship you want. But it's not a reflection of your ability or competence.

And number two, just try—this is so cliché—but **try to enjoy the ride as much as possible**. Because this is the last few years you get to enjoy being a student, or unless you go to graduate school, but people go to graduate school further down the line after a few years of work, at least in a typical situation. [These will be] the last few years

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you get to enjoy before you assume multiple responsibilities as a working adult, as a parent, as someone who has to be financially responsible for yourself. And your happiness and your memories are not worth sacrificing over a grade.

And nowadays, there are also multiple routes to getting the job qualification you want. I mean, if you want to go to graduate school, you don't have to go immediately after you graduate undergrad. You can work a few years, or you can go to get a diploma and then transfer to the school you want. Or if you don't get the job you want, there's always an opportunity for transfer or doing volunteering, doing internships, doing different attachments or doing something overseas.

And also, if you're struggling, you're not alone and do not hesitate to reach out for help. Because I know it may not appear to be the case, but there are a lot of people in NUS and outside of NUS who care for you and are willing to help you.

Thanks so much, Dr. Lee.”

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### **Closing Remarks (05:00)**

**LLN:** “And with that, thank you so much Tas, Yi Feng, and Wei Jie for sharing with us your stories, your insights, and really spending so much time just to be with us today. And with that, thank you very much for coming. Thank you.”: “And with that, thank you so much Tas, Yi Feng, and Wei Jie for sharing with us your stories, your insights, and really spending so much time just to be with us today. And with that, thank you very much for coming.”

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### **Outro Voiceover**

“Thank you for tuning in to the CDTL podcast.”

### **Outro Music**

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