

HOW ARE YOU?

Inner strength and exhaustion



What is inner strength?

- **Overall welfare**
 - Mental health and physical health
 - these two are inseparable, a person is a whole
- **Individual**
 - burdening factors and strengths are relative to the individual
 - each person has their own way of maintaining balance in the everyday life
- **Many factors influence your ability to get by**
 - for example, performance, motivation, environment, social relationships, study skills, getting help and support

Exercise:

A continuum of strength

You feel very tired all the time. The everyday life feels unbearably heavy and the burden is too great.

You feel good and for the most part energetic. The everyday life is going great, and if there is stress, it is possible to recover from it.



At which point in this continuum would you place your own strength at this moment?

You can think of your state, for example, what it has been like in the past week.

What is study exhaustion?

A study related stress syndrome, which, according to an established definition, consists of three factors:

- 1) Exhaustion type of fatigue**
- 2) Cynical attitude towards school or studies**
- 3) Feeling of inadequacy as a student**

Also the emotional (relating to emotions) and cognitive (relating to data processing) dimension of exhaustion has recently been taken into account in research.

What is study exhaustion?

- Demands and resources -model has often been used as a theoretical background in the study of exhaustion.
- A person can take great stress and peak periods, as long as they have the chance to unwind.
- Excessive and continuous pressure and stress will burden the body's recovery system and may lead to exhaustion.
- Any healthy person can get exhausted, if the stress is excessive and prolonged.

An exercise: Balance

Burdens

What things are burdening you in your everyday life?

Burdens, but also gives energy

What things in your everyday life are partially burdensome, but also energizing?

Energizing and restoring

What things in your everyday life energize you and help you recover from stress?

Towards balance

- In the previous exercise we contemplated on:
 - recognizing **stressful factors** in your own everyday life
 - recognizing **factors supporting mental health and strength**
- It is also good to learn about:
 - recognizing **excessive stress**:
 - What does my body feel like, when I am overburdened?
 - What changes take place in my thoughts and emotions, when I am overburdened?

An experience of study exhaustion

"I am still studying and already on my freshman year I started working alongside with my studies. I was working 3-4 times a week and studied in contact teaching at the same time. After the winter and the turn of the year I started to notice, that I am really tired, anxious and cannot get enough sleep, rest or nourishment.

For me, admitting study exhaustion to myself was the hardest part. When I admitted it to myself, it was much easier to seek help, and luckily I got some from the curator at the student welfare. It took a year for me to get things in balance and I truly started prioritizing myself before other things, which had been challenging for me earlier."

How to prevent exhaustion?

- What are the things you can influence?
 - Maintaining balance in your own everyday life, in other words, **supporting recovery and strength** as a counterweight to stress
 - Overall welfare, that is, **taking care of mental health** and **physical care** (nourishment, exercise, sleep and rest)
 - Practicing **self-compassion** and **leniency**

How to prevent exhaustion?

- What are the things you can influence?
 - **Learn to recognize** your need of rest and recovery
 - **Seek help and support in time:** the student health care, municipal and easy access services
 - **Ask others how they are doing:** the meaning of communality and social relationships to your well-being is great

How to prevent exhaustion?

- Which factors influence your studies?
 - **Practice study skills** (for example, the skill to find information from different sources, assimilation of information, understanding of meanings and supporting memory)
 - **Support of studies at your school** (for example, special education, individual support, student counselling, mentor support, student welfare, support relating to exams, such as additional time)
 - **Mental health skills and supporting mental health** are being discussed: there is open talk about mental health, getting by and support

Remember these three things:

- Taking care of your own inner strength helps to maintain the balance between stress and recovery.
- If stress is continuous and excessive, anyone can get exhausted. It is possible to recover from exhaustion, when you get help and support.
- Getting by and exhaustion are personal traits. Good self-knowledge will help you find your assets and ways to support your inner strength.

Where to seek help and support?

- **Online:**

- SEKASIN-chat:
sekasin247.fi
- Chats and discussion groups:
nyyti.fi/opiskelijalle
- Support and chats:
nuortennetti.fi
nuortenlinkki.fi/mista-apua
- Itsenäisesti tehtävä
Elämäntaitokurssi:
hyvakysymys.fi/kurssi/et/

- **At your school:**

- Guidance counselor
- Special education teacher
- Curator
- Psychologist
- School nurse
- Youth worker
- Group leader
- Other personnel

THANK YOU!



Bibliography

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