

THRIVE – Keeping Well-being Habits and Practices in Place

There are many strategies and tips we can provide students in helping them to navigate their life beyond The Grove and while at university. Some of these are more obvious, such as attending all of one's classes, knowing deadlines and keeping up with readings, assignments and labs. Others might be less obvious and include meeting with a faculty advisor throughout the year, making use of the academic skills and writing centres on campus, and sitting in the front row of lectures as a way to enhance engagement and comfort level to ask questions.

Our hope is that students will also keep in mind one of the values that they hopefully absorbed during their time at LCS – the emphasis on the *education of the whole person – in body, mind and spirit*– and to use this as a template to emulate beyond life at The Grove. With this in mind, if students think about THRIVE as representing six buckets to fill during their time after LCS, they will be equipping themselves with many well-being tools to succeed both in learning and in life.

T – Thoughts and Positive Emotions

It is not about being happy all of the time, but research does show that experiencing positive emotions, which can include joy, hope, interest, determination, pride and inspiration to name a few, leads to a greater ability to handle challenges. We know that our students are going to feel sadness, fear, worry and stress. This is normal and okay. As [Dave Mochel](#) said recently during a talk at LCS, *“While you cannot choose what shows up in life, you have an incredible capacity to choose what you practice. This choice has a profound impact on the quality of your life.”* While it isn't about removing all 'negative' emotions, it is about infusing our lives with activities and actions that fill our bucket of positive emotions, including incorporating a regular practice of gratitude, doing acts of kindness and connecting with others.

H – Healthy Habits

While students don't always appreciate it at the time, Lakefield instills a sense of structure and routine in daily life, and this is something we hope they will continue with. While the actual routine may differ (no more morning Chapel, for instance!), students can incorporate regular times to study, set goals for themselves, know what time of day works best to get work completed, and consider learning new techniques to remain focused (for example, trying the [Pomodoro Technique](#)). Establishing consistent routines and habits can help provide a solid foundation from which to handle the uncertainty and challenges our students might face.

R – Relationships: *“There is no greater indicator of happiness and success in college than the quality of your relationships.” – Uthrive: How to Succeed in College (And Life)*

One might say that 'developing relationships' is like the secret sauce at Lakefield. Fostering positive relationships is something we hold dear, modelled by our staff, and observed in our alumni who keep in touch with the school and each other for decades following graduation. This intangible quality is something that we have always valued, and now the science is backing this up in terms of the benefits it provides: devoting time and energy to nurture positive relationships results in greater engagement, higher quality work, higher GPAs, higher well-being, greater self-esteem, lower rates of depression, and a better response to stressful situations. We encourage our students to keep in touch with each other, but also to carve out ways to develop new friendships. We want our students to feel comfortable and confident to “reach out to people precisely when stress makes them want to withdraw”, and most importantly, to make friends their 'go-to' move.

I – Inner Awareness

Though getting to know one's self takes time and opportunities for a wide range of experiences, one thing that our students are aware of having come through their time at LCS, are their strengths. Using their strengths as a starting point – particularly when facing new and challenging situations – immediately provides them with tools that are energizing, relatively easy to access, and essential to who they are. Whether it is love of learning, zest, curiosity, perseverance, kindness or hope – knowing and understanding the unique constellation of strengths that each of our grads possess helps them to know themselves, find greater meaning and purpose, and ultimately leading more authentic and complete lives.

V – Vitality

Vitality, and essentially feeling like one is thriving, comes from foundational practices that students have been encouraged to learn while at The Grove: sleep, move and fuel the body, and get outside every day. Getting adequate sleep, if nothing else, is probably the most important way for students to do their best, as it impacts social, emotional, mental and physical health. We know that getting daily physical activity, eating a balanced diet that focuses on whole foods and minimizes sugar and processed ingredients fuels the brain and sustains energy. And finally, whether our students are living in urban or rural settings, we hope they will continue to embrace nature and the outdoors, knowing the benefits it provides to overall well-being.

E – Engagement

Getting involved at Lakefield is so intrinsic to what our students do, they often take it for granted. Our hope is that grads will continue to 'care, connect and contribute' in their new environments. Joining clubs, intramurals, doing volunteer work and getting part-time jobs will not only help them to find their 'tribe' and develop their passions, doing so will also help them feel connected to something beyond themselves and allow for continued growth.