

Bounce Back, Part 2

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SPEAKERS

Danna Smith, Ebonee Williams, Vince Shallow, Utamm Kaluri, Celine Phan

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Ebonee Williams 00:02

Hey everyone, welcome to Triton Tools and Tidbits. Thanks for joining us for part two of recovering from academic disappointment. If you listened last week, you know that there was some great information shared, and hopefully you heard your story articulated. This week you'll hear a little more about tips and survival tactics in part two of recovering from academic disappointment. I forgot to say - my name was Dr. Ebonee Williams. I'm the Director of Virtual Experience and Peer Engagement Initiatives here at UC San Diego. Thanks for tuning in. So, I'm gonna have each one of them introduce themselves and then we're gonna dive right in.

Vince Shallow 00:44

Okay. Hi, my name is Vince Shallow. I am a fourth-year and I am a John Muir college student. My major is communications with a minor in psychology. And I actually was a transfer student coming from Riverside City College, up in Riverside.

Ebonee Williams 01:03

Excellent. Well, Utamm?

Utamm Kaluri 01:08

Hello there. Thank you very much, Dr. Williams, for having me on your podcast. It's a great honor to be here. My name is Utamm. I'm a fourth-year senior from Sixth College, a human bio major and I'm looking forward to discussing this really important topic.

Ebonee Williams 01:28

Celine, will you introduce yourself?

Celine Phan 01:30

Yeah, of course. Hi, everyone. It's so nice to hear from all of you. My name is Celine, I'm a third-year, my gender pronouns are she/her/hers and I'm from Revelle College. I'm a public health major

Ebonee Williams 01:43

Danna

Danna Smith 01:45

Hi, my name is Danna. I pronounce it Danna-banana. But I can also be named Danny. I am a fourth year human biology major. I was also transfer student I came in from San Diego Mesa College - woo Mesa! And my minor is in socio-cultural anthropology. It's great to be here.

Ebonee Williams 02:07

Thank you all for being here. And look at that great college representation - got a few transfers in the house. No matter what your experience and what you're going through, hopefully, you'll be able to connect with one of their journeys at UC San Diego. I have a few more questions - not too many more. One is - are there any resources you would point people towards, who may not be as familiar with the resources at UC San Diego - that either supported your academic disappointment or gave you a hug and picked you back up? Whatever version of that that you'd like to share.

Danna Smith 02:38

Oh, I can absolutely take over this question. I'm going to put in a quick plug for OASIS, not just because I work there, but because they are absolutely amazing at what they do. So, OASIS is the Office of Academic Support and Instructional Services. And they do anything from study jams, to - I believe there bi-weekly work workshops on absolutely, mostly any subject. But mainly the ones that I'm familiar with are physics and organic chemistry. So, what you do is you sign up for them, and then twice a week, or once a week, depending on how many times they want you to meet, you meet up with this sort of - like a TA or an instructional assistant. And then they're able to work through practice problems, run through any additional information, or even just answer any questions that you might have that you might not necessarily feel comfortable asking the professor. Because for whatever reason students think that professors are these big, mean, scary grading machines, right? But Coronavirus has definitely shown that a lot of professors are human. They have their kids, they have their dogs, they have their cats - really cute. It really shows that humanity. But definitely check out OASIS, and if not, drop-in tutoring and Geisel is great as well. Sometimes you just need to pop in ask a question, and you're out in less than 10 minutes. So definitely take advantage of all of those resources that UCSD [provides.] I like to think of it as you're paying for all of these resources. Why not use them? Right?

Ebonee Williams 04:16

I appreciate that. And I'll say for those who have never physically been on our campus, drop-in hours are hosted by our Teaching and Learning Commons. You can find that in a virtual space, even right now. So - appreciate that.

Celine Phan 04:30

If it's in any situation as similar to me in terms of, you know, feeling like everything's too overwhelming, there are a lot of resources such as CAPS. Like I said, I recently had a social with an organization called Active Minds and they're very diligent on mental health. If you all would like to see that I'm sure that it's on the UCSD club page. That's all I have in terms of resources. What I would like to also add from my previous question is - I understand that in a lot of situations, therapy these days is really hard to get, whether that be financially, or whether that be because you don't - appointments get packed very easily. Availability, lack of resources. Really, if you can find just an outlet for you - someone to talk to about it and someone that you can feel comfortable and trust about these issues that you're having - I would definitely recommend that.

Utamm Kaluri 05:27

Yeah, definitely. So, I think what Danna said is absolutely correct. And just to go off of that, I think that there's a way to separate this - there's the sort of resources you would use for granular methodological help, like the study skills that we were talking about, and then there are the resources you would use for emotional support. Just to speak of the latter for a second - unfortunately, society has stigmatized as such that professional help is sometimes seen as weak, or as seen as something that shouldn't be looked at. If you need professional help, you should definitely get professional help. Even the top students, I'm sure that some of them have professional help, whether it's psychological help, or whether it's something like that. So that's definitely something everyone should consider if they need it. But on the methodological side, I think there are two things to say about this. The first thing is that a lot of students - when they try to learn how to learn, they'll go on YouTube, and they'll type in study strategies, or something like that, which is a good start. But what I find is, when I type in study strategies, you find five minute videos saying they'll change your life - try these five study strategies, and you're gonna get straight A's. The world isn't that simple. Studying is an art, studying is a science, studying takes time, studying takes effort. Trying to learn from those five minute videos, how to go from getting B's and C's to getting 100%, all the time, setting the curve - the world doesn't work like that. So then to go to my second point, that is to find a mentor, or find someone who understands how to study - someone who's been in your shoes, and someone who has gone through what you've went through, and someone who can help you go through the challenges of college. For me, I can tell you that my mentor - his name is Dr. Andre Pincet. He's an actual attending physician at UCSD Jacobs Medical Center. And he has been so helpful in guiding me both on this mindset stuff and on the granular studying stuff - how to approach college. Because this is not an easy track for anyone. And even if people try to make it seem easy, chances are, it's just a show. If someone's saying, "Oh, yeah, college is the easiest thing I've ever gone through." That's just so not true. So, shout out to him, of course. And just as an overall takeaway from this, I just want to end on two notes when it comes to this question. It is completely okay to get any sort of professional help that you need. And second of all, look for a mentor because mentors are the best thing ever. Thank you.

Vince Shallow 08:27

That was actually wonderful. Thank you for talking about mental health Utamm, I really appreciated that. On the note of mental health, actually, it's important to escape from things that are a little bit too - not escape, but kind of leave things that are really burdening you. One of my favorite high school teachers - and he was also the basketball coach, Coach Robinson - he always told me "A human can only juggle two things because they only have two hands. So as soon as you add that third or fourth or fifth or sixth thing, it becomes very difficult. Especially when those things are very intertwined with each other." I mean, let's say your academic lifestyle is tied with your social life, and your social life is tied into your occupational life - things like that become very difficult. So, I've learned that sometimes it's okay to kind of leave those things temporarily. I play video games a lot. So, when I get really stressed, or when it's almost time for that big midterm, I take a break and kind of focus on myself - whether it'd be playing a lot of video games - I've been playing a lot of APEX recently - or when it comes to just listening to music. I love listening to music as well. I've been listening to a lot of Moodymann recently. I've been listening to a lot of music and kind of coming in and coming out of school when I need to. So, I find that, finding that escape or finding that moment to not be a student really helps. So that's one resource that's off-campus... Another thing that I also know is that friends - I know we said friends can

be good, friends can be bad, but they're still your friends. So, if you need someone to lean on, don't be afraid to talk to them and be like, "Hey, like, school has been really tough right now," or "I'm kind of in the midst of four other different projects that I need to work on," it's totally fine. People are also here to help rather than hurt. So, I would just keep that in mind. I had another point, but I totally forgot it. So, I think I think that's good. Just have an escape, and have someone to talk to.

Ebonee Williams 10:34

Well, being the amazing UC San Diego students who are, you stole my secret question, which was - any last words of advice? You already added them into your resources question. If there's anything that anyone has that they just need to say, before I start to close this out...? I think you shared such great resources. Thank you for being authentic about your journey. It's true. I don't know anyone who hasn't had some form of academic disappointment while being educated. And education is growth. And I really appreciate you mentioning the reflection piece, the being present peace, the knowing yourself, escaping, balance, right? And having techniques and strategies for what we take on. Does anyone feel like there's anything else they want to add before I close this out? I don't want you to feel like you can't.

Vince Shallow 11:28

Yes -I'd like to say something. I just remember my point. Take time for yourself. I know we talked about escapism, but escapism is different from taking time from yourself. I know at UCSD, we're in the quarter system - the UC system is in the quarter system as well. 10 weeks can really take a toll on someone, especially during that winter-spring transition where you only have a week to yourself. Please just take time for yourself. And that just means, you know, relaxing, or just doing something else. The little wins. Focus on the little wins. If you have four midterms, four assignments, and four one-page papers to work on - which is I believe is unreasonable, and a most common workload, I know I have that - just work on the paper. Or maybe you just draft, or brainstorm. Don't take everything at once. Because one, the quality of performance may be low at that moment, when you take everything at once. But also, when you focus on the little wins, it's a little boost. It gives you a little time to know, maybe, "Hey, that one paper wasn't that bad, let's do the other one." Or "You know what, maybe this paper helped me with thinking about the midterm, let's do that some more." Or "Oh, let's work on another project." You know, if you take time to focus on the little things, the big things also turn into little things too. So that's really something that I would want to push towards the audience to focus on. It could even not be academic. It could be "Oh, my room's a mess, I have to clean it." Or "Oh, I have dishes piling up, I need to do those too." Or "The dog needs to go on the walk." Very little things that can also take you away from academics, or push you pushing toward academics, will really help you take things in. And in terms of academic disappointment, or academic stress, the little things really help you a lot. When it comes down to scheduling, too. I know for me, whenever I need to figure out when the next paper's due, when I'm ready to do anything - and I did not schedule in the syllabus - I take the time to read it and check off things I've already done and things that are due, and then just kind of go through it. Very little actions turn into very big wins later on.

Ebonee Williams 13:31

Some great words to close out on. I really appreciate it. You all made me think about my fun quote - "Insanity is doing the same thing, yet expecting different results." And you all have shared that one way to recover from academic disappointment is to learn or try new things, and get to know what strategies work for you. I wish you all a great journey of success. I appreciate you for being here, being a part of

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our UC San Diego community. And hopefully we'll have you again on our podcast, as you are so wise. And thanks to our listeners for listening in. I hope you grab something that inspired, or connected to, or affirmed your own journey. I appreciate you for listening to Triton Tools and Tidbits and we hope to hear from you again. Or have you come join us again next week. I'm Dr. Ebonee Williams. Thank you.