



Maintaining your Academic Study Momentum in Challenging Times #1:

The Time-pressed student – How to Balance Academic Study, Work and Family Care

Laura Brammar

Senior Careers Consultant

**The Careers Group,
University of London**

[All images free to use from pixabay.com]



Welcome to the Maintaining your Academic Study Momentum in Challenging Times Series

We have a range of qualifications represented in this cohort

Global MBA, Masters in Professional Accountancy, Postgraduate Qualifications in Law, LLM, BSc Computer Science and many more

Your qualifications will offer you a range of relevant professional skills, particular knowledge sets, enhanced competencies and attributes

These webinars will help you to maximise your study time despite difficult challenges, whatever you are studying or wherever you maybe based

Why webinars?

- Complements distance learning aspect of your studies
- Provides a chance to discover fresh content with an experienced facilitator
- Allows you to share your ideas, thoughts and experiences with each other in a global classroom
- Gives various opportunities to engage with relevant activities and time for questions at the end
- Productive, supportive and dynamic online learning space
- Online learning is becoming central during this time

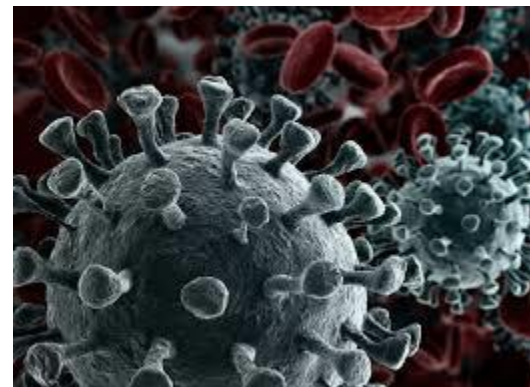
Quick introductions



- Senior Careers Consultant for 14 years, including with MBA and PG students
- Instructor on award-winning *Enhance Your Careers and Employability Skills* MOOC, 89,000 global active learners
- Provide 1:1 careers coaching, CV/resume reviews, practice interviews, professional development and career management webinars and workshops
- MSc Organisational Behaviour, PG Cert Career Development and Coaching, PG Cert Education
- Published work on online career learning in academic journals

A challenging and disruptive time

- Global pandemic
- Unprecedented impact on billions of people's lives
- Affecting way we work, study, spend time with our family, interact with the world around us
- Increase in stress as manage new ways of working, potentially home schooling children, caring for vulnerable relatives, pressure on employment, struggling economies, etc.



Activity #1



What impact is the Coronavirus crisis having on *you* at the moment?

Many of us are dealing with overload

Task overload

Role overload

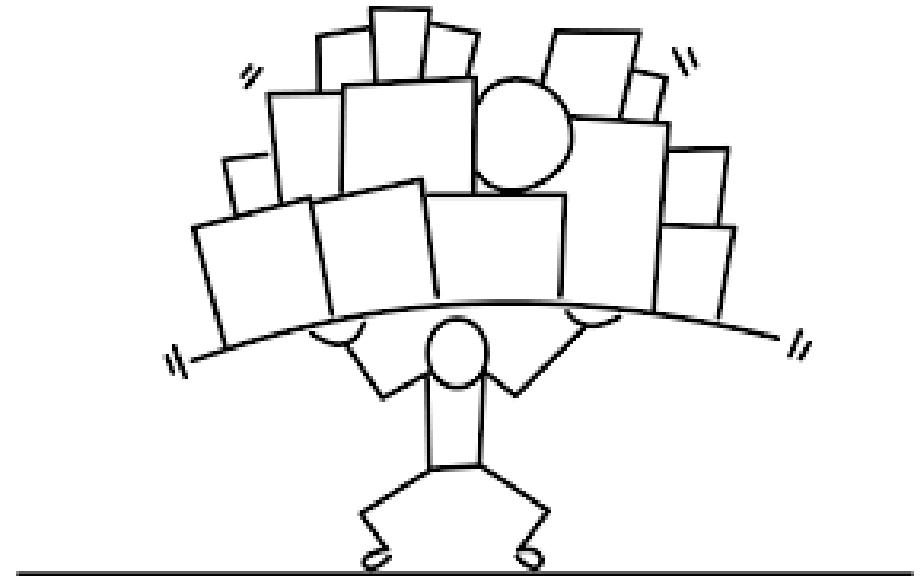
Technology overload

Pandemic news overload

Barriers to our usual stress release activities overload

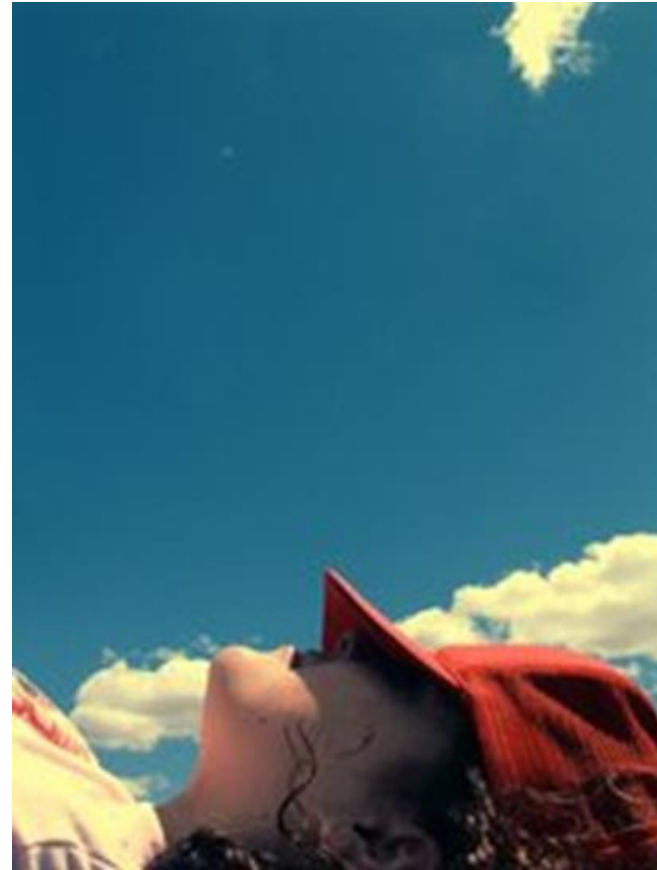
Concerns about the future overload

Expectation overloads



POLL: Before we start!

On a scale of 1
(low)-5(high), how
confident are you
in your current
ability to balance
your time
between study,
work and family
care?



What we will cover



Apply a new 6 Ps framework to help us to balance our commitments

Identify study, work and family priorities for the next few months

Create strategies for smart working to make the most of your time and energy

Share your personal tips for emergency “overload first aid”

Your next steps

Additional resources

6 P's Framework to help you balance

Priorities

Pacing

Planning

Perspective

Personas

Personal narrative

Activity #2 – What's your current juggling score?!

How would you rate your current juggling score on the study/work/family balance right now

(1 – dropping all the balls – 10 keeping them all in the air, even having some fun!)



How are your studies progressing so far?

Reflect on your pace of learning – need to adjust?

Map out your study journey so far - close to completing?

Identify your next 'hurdle' - approaching a demanding period?

Remind yourself why – strain on maintaining motivation?

Take a moment to take stock of NOW

Study/Work/Family = all dynamic activities

Resources available to you are **changing**

External events are changing too and maybe continue to change for a many weeks/months ahead

You need to **recalibrate** your approach regularly

Make note of **successes** in your study, work or family life, in these very challenging circumstances

Advice from other students

"Keep a journal of progress or a list of achievements each day no matter how small because sometimes it's hard to see how you're making progress day to day in such a big project."

Activity #3

What are your worry or guilt triggers?



Common guilt and worry triggers

“My job is completely different and I feel out of my depth”

“My childcare is no longer available”

“I’m letting my family down because I can’t dedicate enough time to them”

“I’m not sure whether my company is going to survive this and my staff will all lose their jobs”

“I’m worried about money”

“I need some peace and quiet to work on my dissertation and study”

Activity #4

Applying the 6Ps – Identify your must-have priorities (6Ps) – things to reflect on include:

- What do you really need for your own health & wellbeing?
- What are the essentials for your family care?
- What are your study priorities?
- What do you need to discuss with your tutors?
- What are your income priorities?

Regaining a sense of control matters

Planning and Pacing (6Ps) matter

How do you organise your activities? Make the morning your focus or make time for specific study in afternoon/evening

Do you schedule in 'downtime'? Give yourself regular breaks and rest time

How do you stay motivated? Understand what phrases or ideas work for you e.g. 'This too will pass'

Advice from other students

"I advocate the 9-5 routine"

"Take a break sometimes to keep yourself fresh"

"Know the signs when it all getting a bit too much"

"Accept that some days will be better than others, and that's OK"

Prioritising tools

- Write down what need to do professionally and personally – get it out of your head
- Must / should / want
- I know how to start this / I don't know how to start this
- Things I can do myself / Things I'm dependent on others to do
- Urgent / important grid





Listen to the narrative you're telling yourself

Personal narrative(6 Ps) which we tell ourselves matter:

"It's a disaster, this will wreck my studies"

"It's a disaster, this will destroy my job"

"It's a disaster, this will ruin everything"

Avoid massive generalisations

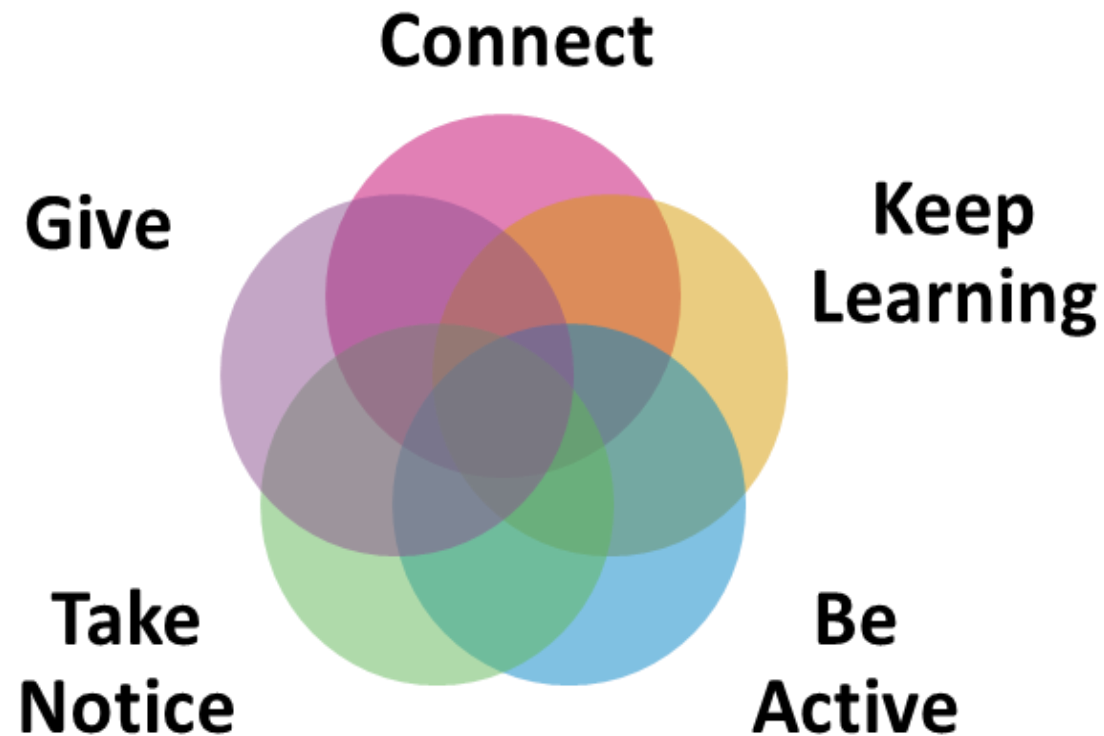
Identify specific impacts and consequences

Focus on one step at a time

Activity #5

- What strategies help you when you are feeling overloaded?

5 ways to well being: New Economic Foundation



Ways to apply this

Connect with others

Keeping in touch with family, friends and colleagues using technology, phone calls etc.

Be active

Keeping active either at home or, if possible, daily exercise outside e.g. walk, run, cycle

Keep learning

Exploring learning new things both within and beyond your studies, e.g. new creative skills, etc.

Give

Being kind and generous to those who surround us and feeling gratitude for what you have

Take notice

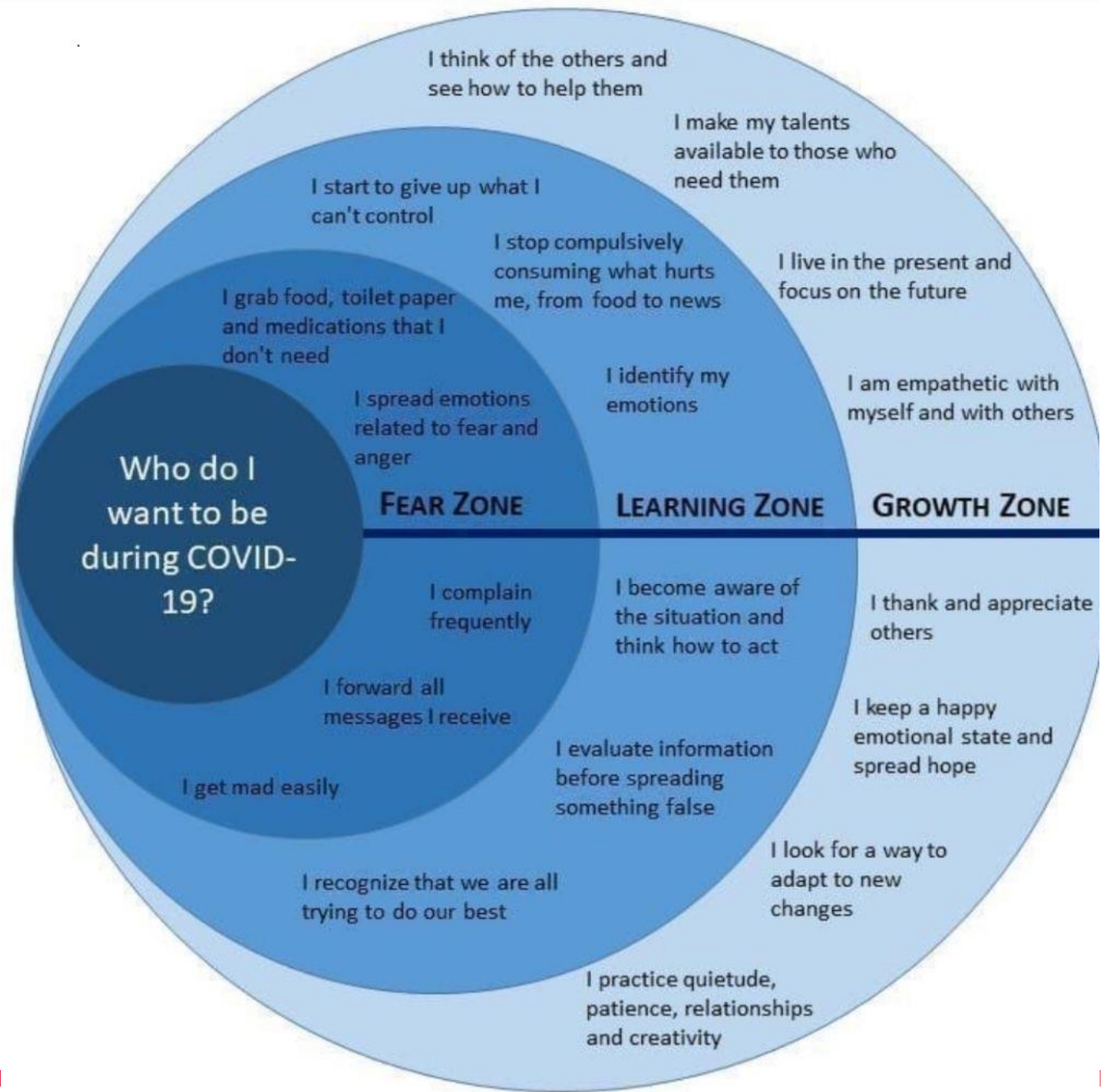
Finding time to really just stop to appreciate your surroundings, both inside and outside

Give yourself the support and space you need

Perspectives and personas (6 Ps)

- Reflect on who you want to be during and after this crisis
- Recognise your support network – internal and external
- Give yourself space to have moments of fear and learning and maybe even growth

Who do you want to be during Covid-19?



Source: Langeh, Monika [@drmonika_langeh]. (2020, March 29), shared by University of Colorado, Boulder)

In summary

- Juggling study/family/work is challenging even BEFORE a pandemic strikes
- Dealing with Covid 19 is challenging on many, many fronts – we all need to be kind and patient with ourselves
- There are many strategies and resources you can use to keep the balls in the air
- The 6 Ps framework is one way to generate some ideas for self-management and self-care



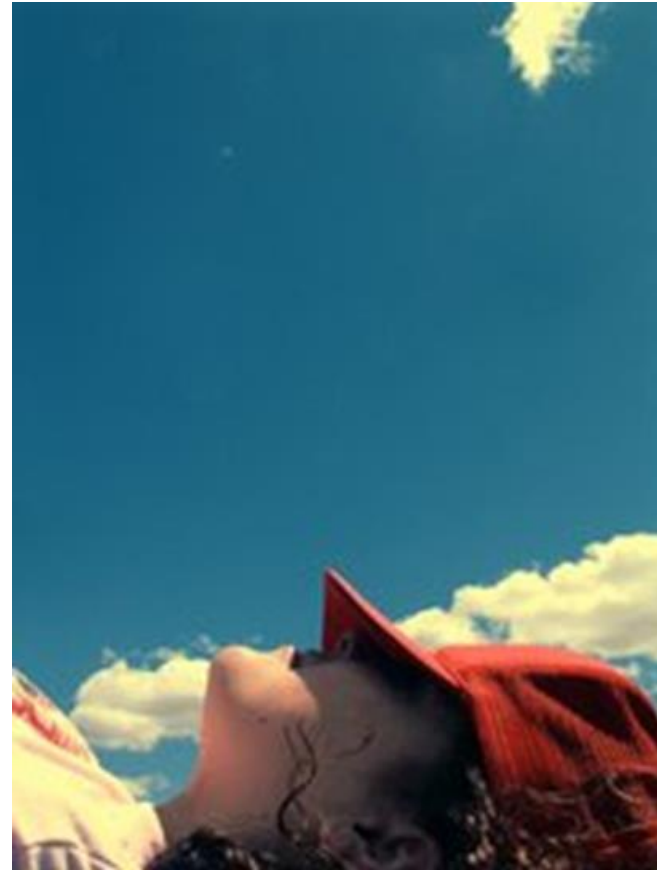
What next for you?

Name one **specific thing** you will do as a result of this webinar that will **improve balance your time between study, work and family care** in the future



POLL: Before we finish!

On a scale of 1
(low)-5 (high), how
confident are you
NOW in **your**
ability balance
your time
between study,
work and family
care?



Thanks

Any questions?



Useful resources

5 Tips to stay productive during the lockdown - <https://www.businessinsider.com/how-to-work-from-home-with-young-children-during-coronavirus-2020-3?r=US&IR=T>

5 ways to support your mental wellbeing during the lockdown - <https://www.topuniversities.com/student-info/health-support/five-ways-look-after-your-mental-health-lockdown>

Allen, D (2001) Getting Things Done: The Art of Stress Free Productivity

Mann, M (2014) Inbox Zero: Cutting Through the Crap to Do the Work That Matters

Inbox Zero - <https://flow-e.com/inbox-zero/>

NEF - 5 ways to well-being - <http://www.fivewaystowellbeing.org/>

The Long Hours Advice Clinic – Professor Cary Cooper (for Worksmart)

<http://www.worksmart.org.uk/workyourproperhoursday/quiz/index.php>

Thanks and see you at a future webinar!

Many, many, many resources on student portal including previous webinars

In the meantime, please share your feedback on today's session at <https://goo.gl/forms/pEpFQUq9K1IfmXAC3>

Next webinar is Webinar 1B: **Maintaining Momentum – The Highs & Lows of Distant Academic Study – Thursday 30 April 2020**

- How can you best anticipate and manage the roller-coaster nature of distant academic study?
- Tips for sustaining your energy and maintaining your momentum towards completing successful academic assessments.
- How can you maintain your academic study focus amidst the distractions of Covid-19 requirements and restrictions?