



UNIVERSITY OF
KWAZULU-NATAL™
INYUVESI
YAKWAZULU-NATALI



Edgewood
Campus



Howard College
Campus



Nelson R Mandela
Campus



Pietermaritzburg
Campus



Westville
Campus

College of Health Science

The Impact of Support Strategies: A Pathway to Students' Academic Success and Personal Well-being

Student Support Services: Suzanne Stokes, Zamahlabangane Mtshali,
Wulganithi Thaver, Saloschini Pillay

Presenter: Suzanne Stokes ~ Educational Psychologist: Student Counsellor

Siyaphumelela Conference

June 2024

INSPIRING GREATNESS

Academic Monitoring and Support Policy

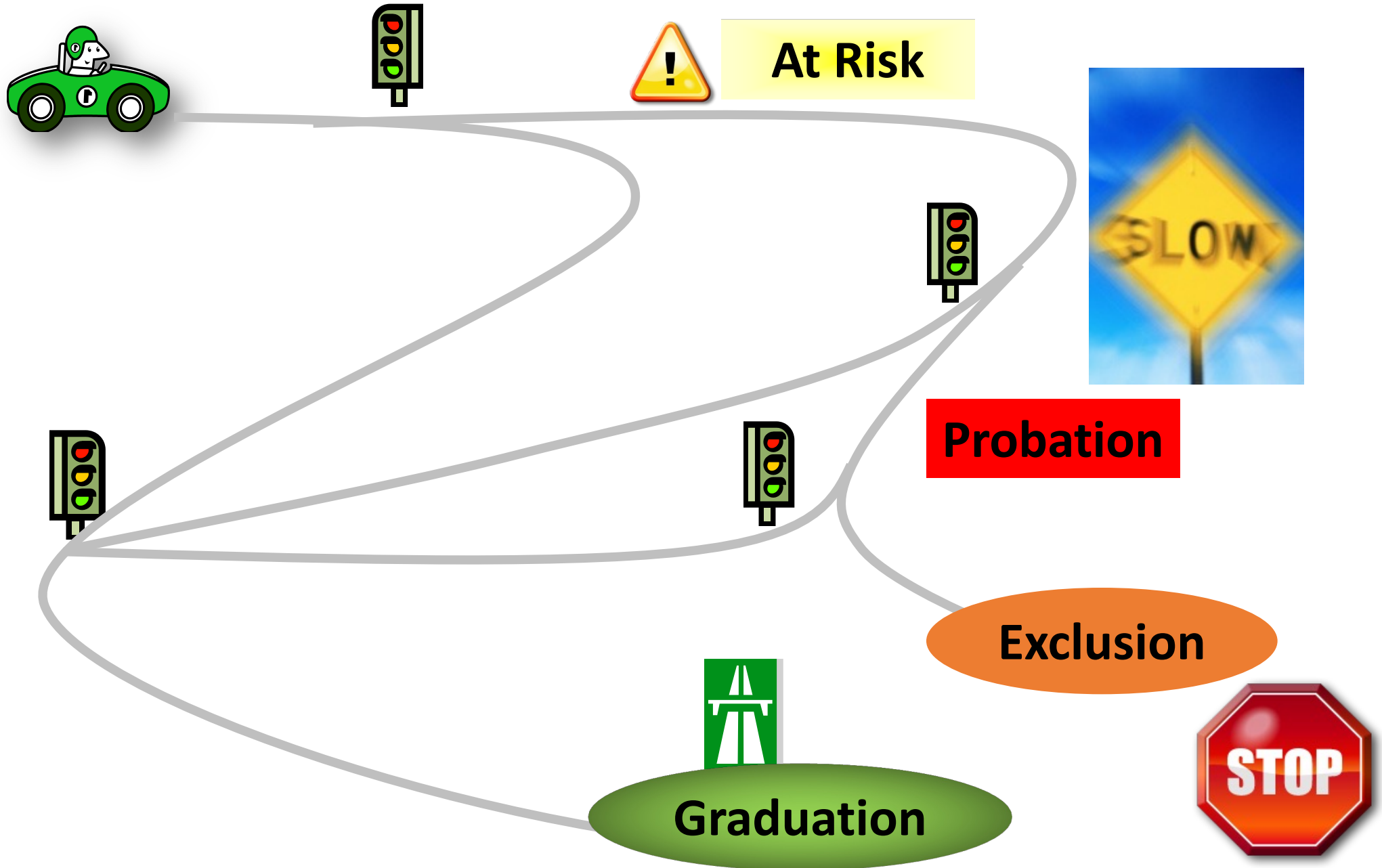
(Illustration of the robot system)



The
Road
Ahead



Graduation



INSPIRING GREATNESS

The categories

Blue

Exceptional academic performance

Green

Good academic standing

Orange

At risk

Red

On Probation

Purple

Excluded

Codes used

RISK At risk

RSK2 Still at risk, continue counseling

FPRR Failed progression, readmit on probation

PROB Continue on probation

FPMA Failed probation, must appeal for readmission

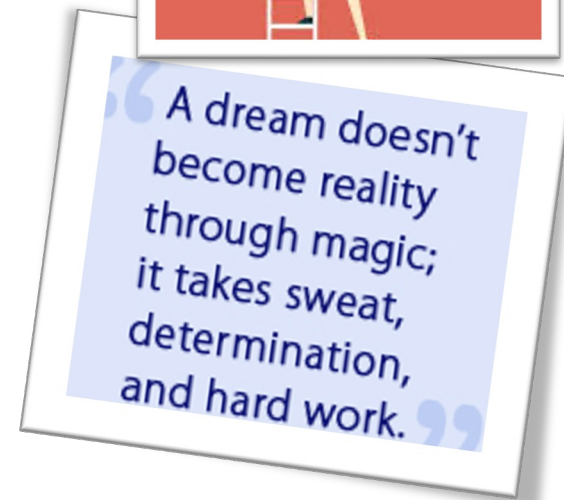
XNFA Final exclusion, may not appeal

SUPPORT SERVICES OFFERED

We offer a **free, professional** and **confidential** counselling and academic support service to all students

Some specific services offered are:

- Structured Student Retention and Throughput Programme [Wellness Programme]
- Individual Personal Assessment, Counselling & Psychotherapy
- Crisis, Trauma & Psychiatric Emergencies
- Academic Support Programmes
 - Academic Orientation & Integration
 - Academic Assessment & Intervention
- Group Therapy
- Life Skills Development
 - Peer Wellness Mentoring
- Career Assessment, Counselling & Development
- Living and Learning Communities
- Graduate Development for the World of Work



WHAT & WHO IS A STUDENT COUNSELLOR?

- A student counsellor is a **trained and registered professional** (Psychologist or Clinical Social Worker), who offers students support interventions (individual and group counselling, career and academic interventions)
- **Helps students** to identify within themselves, what support services they would need to develop holistically, into professional health practitioners
- Encourage students to be responsible for their own learning and wellness and **remaining in control of their journey at university**



If you build it, they will come

College of Health Sciences

Student Support Services invites you to Aiming for Success Workshops

transitioning and adjusting to
the dynamic learning
environments

living a
healthy
lifestyle

managing your
mental health and
wellness

balancing
relationships and
social life

managing
familial
demands

coping with
the fear of
failure

building
confidence

being your
best

establishing
healthy coping
strategies

emotional
literacy

Self-esteem and
resilience building

substance
use and
abuse

celebrating
the success

Managing self
with the time you
have



INSPIRING GREATNESS

Student Wellness and Academic Transformation (SWAT)

AIM: to offer a coordinated, comprehensive SWAT programme where all Schools, College and wider University role players have clear roles, responsibilities and accountability and work in an integrated manner to ensure that equity of access translates to equity of outcome in the minimum time.

Student

- To know our students better, understand and appreciate their diverse needs

Wellness &

- To timeously intervene with 1st year students at risk for poor performance, and premature dropout due to non-academic factors

Academic

- To support and monitor students' progress through the year and identify gaps in services and support

Transformation

- To identify responsive, relevant, meaningful and innovative ways of supporting student success.

STUDENT WELLNESS AND ACADEMIC TRANSFORMATION (SWAT - UG) PROGRAM

SWAT Automation

TRACKING AND MONITORING

- Tracking progress
- Able to recognize underperformance and progress

INTERVENTION

Personal, Emotional, Career Development and referrals

PROFILING

Design interventions and strategies aligned to identified needs

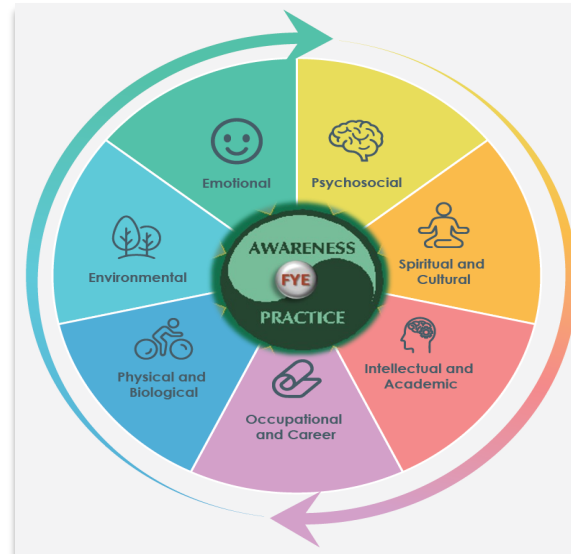
WELLNESS ASSESSMENT

Understand holistic need of students – promote adjustment, engagement and holistic development

AOI
enhance transition to university
and integration to college

FYE
onboarding and critical
transitional skills
• FYEM/PWM/AM

Digitised
UKZN FYE



ACADEMIC SUPPORT
Provide academic support to
enhance academic performance
and retention

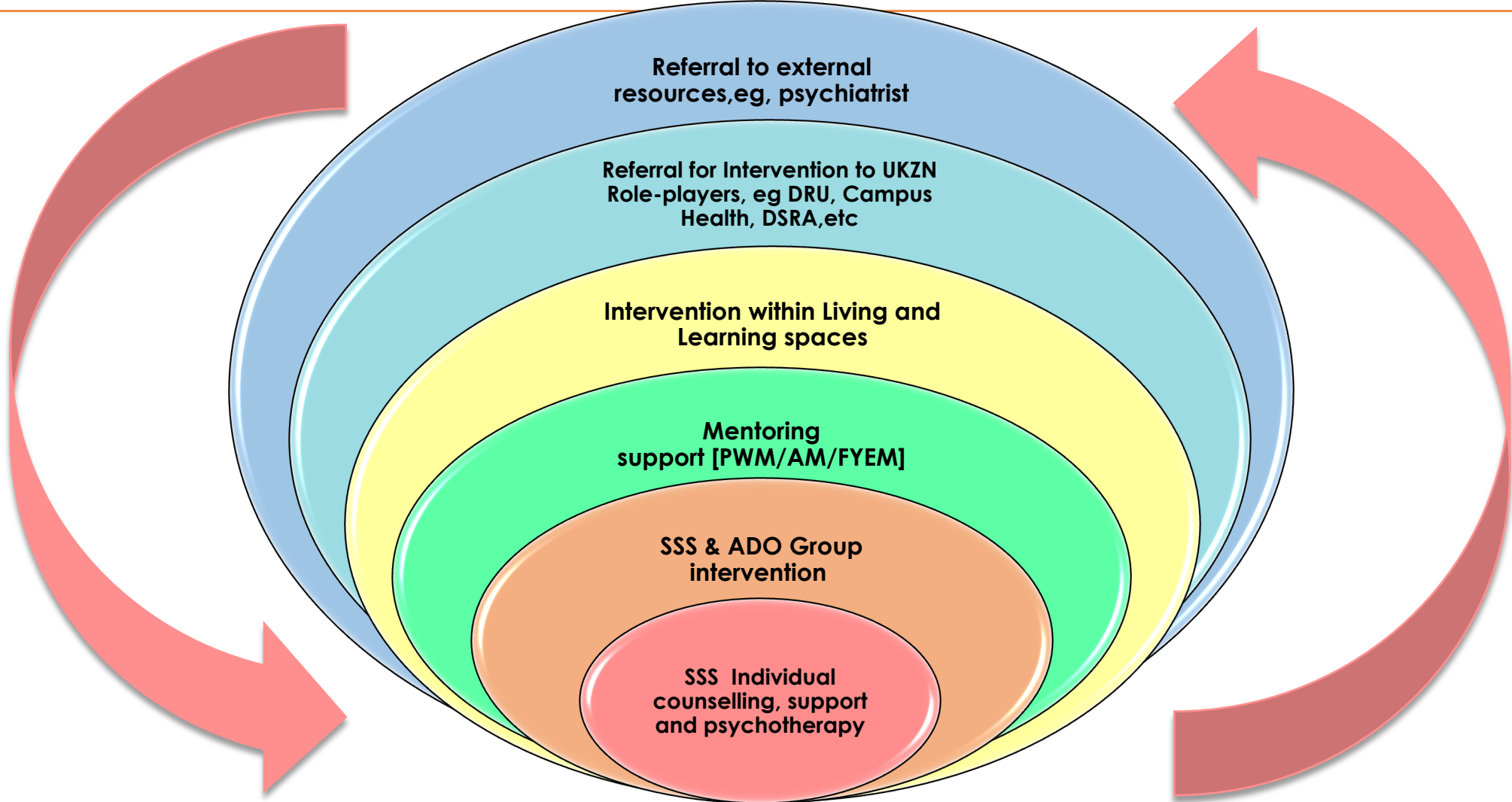
ACADEMIC SKILLS
Equip with appropriate life and
academic skills to enhance
transition, wellness, adjustment and
academic success

LIVING AND LEARNING
COMMUNITIES
Extend the day T&L support to the
evening living spaces

SWAT Profiles

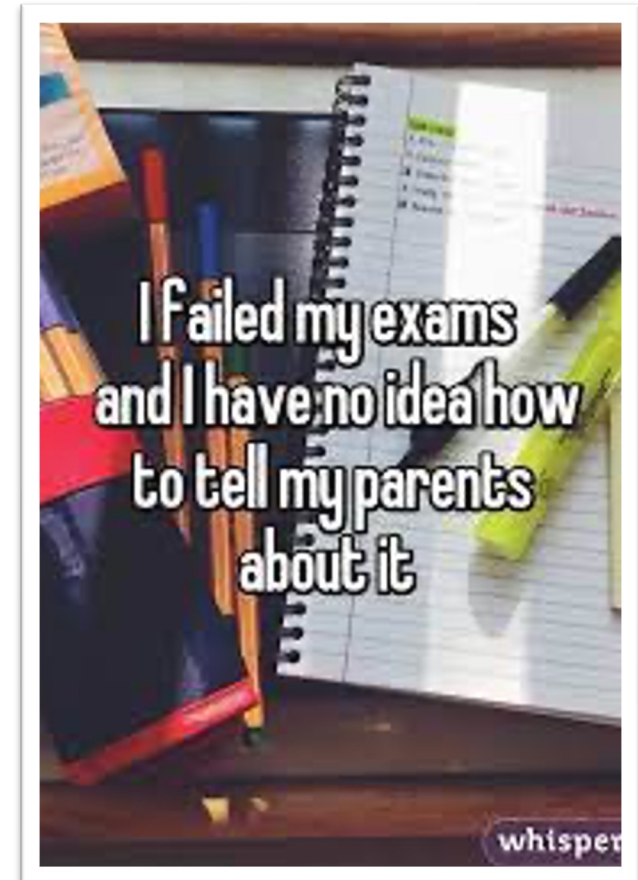
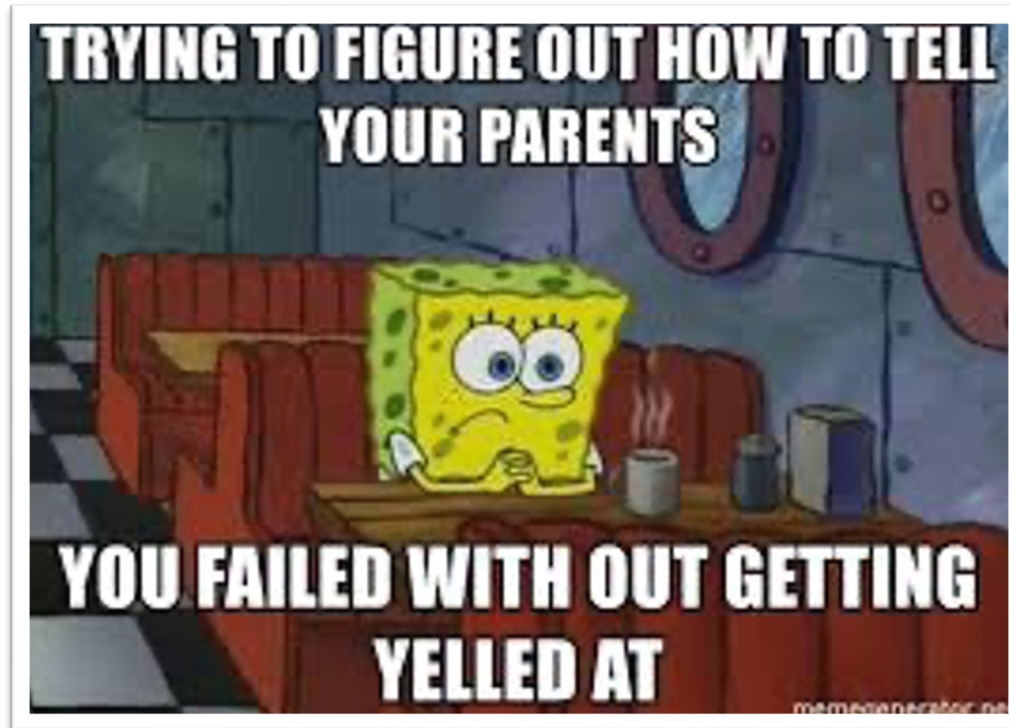
Domain	% flags relative to completion	Categories	% flags relative to completion
Emotional Domain	68%	Family and Relationships	59%
		Adjustment	35%
		Gender and Sexuality	3%
Psycho-social Domain	47%	Adaptation	14%
		Finances	28%
		Money Management	15%
		Food security	3%
Intellectual and Academic Domain	94%	Academic Self-management	70%
		Academic Strategies	18%
		Lectures	53%
		Online Learning	84%
Occupational and Career Domain	42%	Occupational and Career	42%
Environmental Domain	21%	Environmental	21%
Spiritual and Cultural domain	5%	Spiritual and Cultural	5%
Physical and Biological Domain	80%	Physical Health	28%
		Disability	6%
		Mental Health	75%
		Substance Use	3%

HOLISTIC SUPPORT INTERVENTIONS



INSPIRING GREATNESS

What are some of the common feelings and reactions to failure?



SSS PROCESS FLOW FOR STUDENTS WITH NEGATIVE TERM DECISIONS AT THE TIME OF REGISTRATION

Academic Services provides AMS Team with the Negative Term decision list

A. DURING REGISTRATION

1. Student receives letter on negative term decision. Letter stipulates compulsory individual and group sessions with SSS. Decisions on a way forward will be elaborated on at first group meeting with AMS team.

Letter contains the link to complete the Aiming for Success (AFS) Survey and invitation to Group meeting

2. Student completes AFS on Google forms

3a. AMS MEETING PER DISCIPLINE/SCHOOL - AMS Team AL, ADO and SC meet students in groups and discuss the compulsory elements of the rehabilitation contract, accessing of SSS, contracting and expectations from registration to end of semester as per the AMS Policy.

3b. SC receives completed AFS

4. Students with Negative Term Decisions feature on the School Panel Meetings agenda for Tracking and Monitoring of performance and referral for support.

B. DURING SEMESTER

Student Support Services

1. SC Tracks and Monitors attendance to individual and group interventions. Provides feedback to the School Panel Committee.

2. Interventions for identified students

2A. Individual

- Booking via chs.sss@ukzn.ac.za
- Completion of Consent & Intake
- Rehabilitation Contract
- Psychotherapy
- Referrals: Internal & External

2B. Group

- Register to attend via Zoom registration link
- 4 Skills-based sessions offered

3. AMS team meetings with School and Discipline: bi-semester

- End of semester tracking, monitoring & feedback session
- Prior to Exam Board

If you build it, they will come

College of Health Sciences

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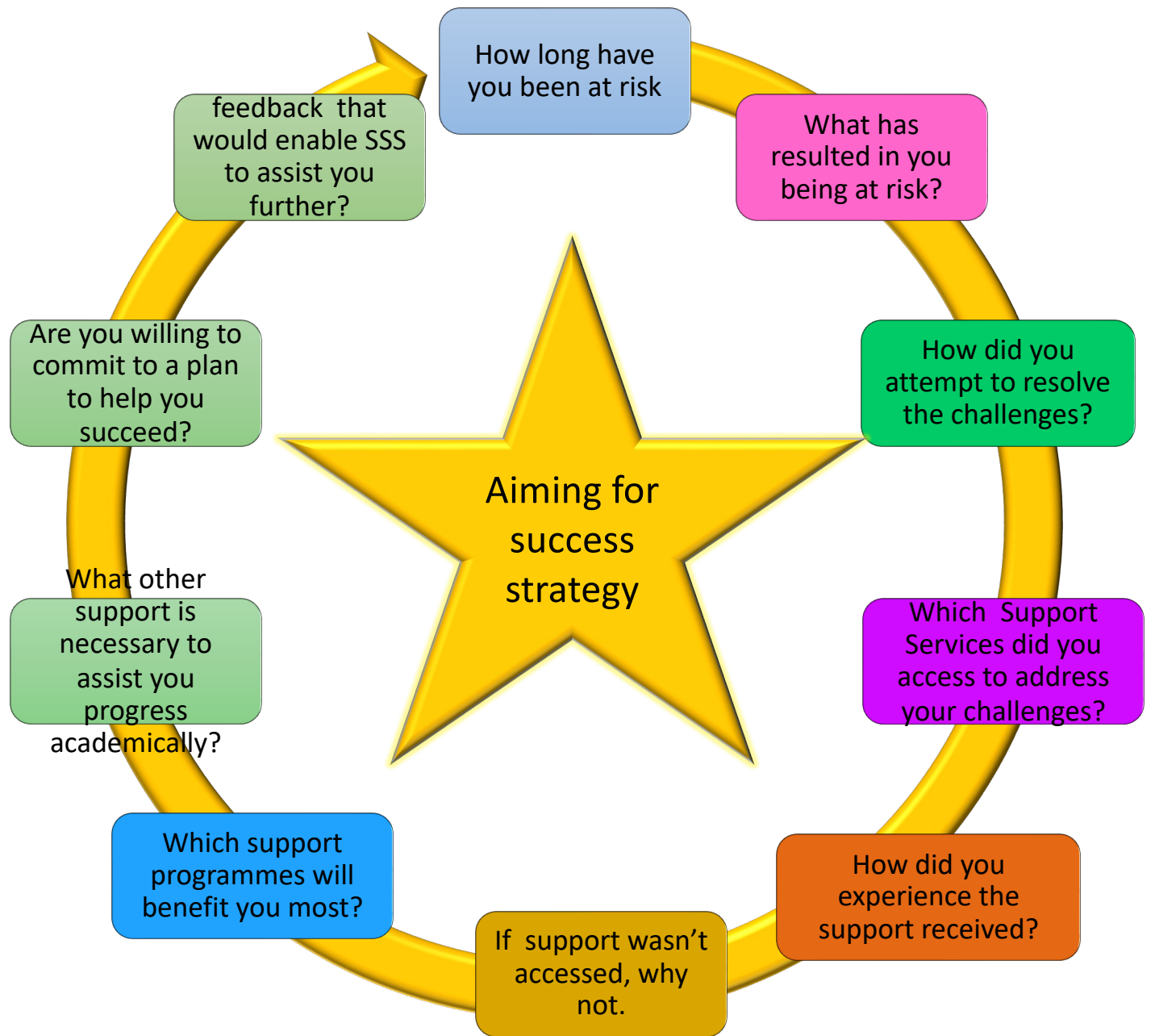
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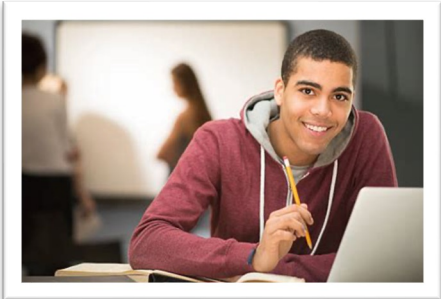


INSPIRING GREATNESS

NAME	
SURNAME	
STUDENT NUMBER	
EMAIL ADDRESS	
DEGREE	
LEVEL OF STUDY	

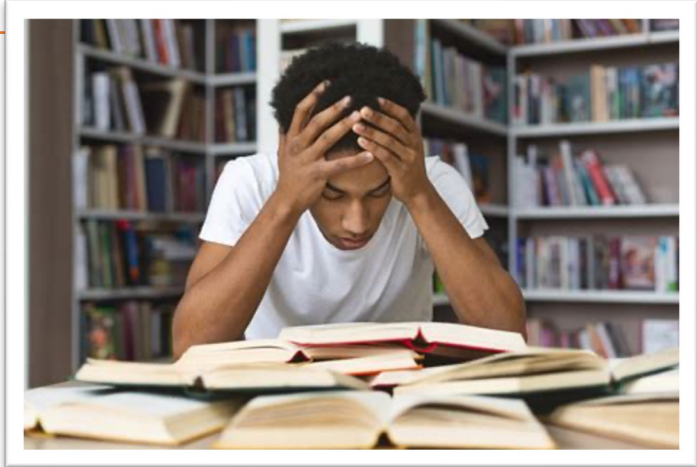


Our student group



+6000 Registered UG

2023



601 students
RISK CODES



532 attending interventions

Permah

- Positive Emotions
- Engagement
- Relationships (creating positive relationships)
- Meaning-making
- Accomplishment & achievement; Health & Wellness

Individual sessions:
main source -an appreciative inquiry in conjunction with psychotherapy.

Webinars/Support group

- growth mindset and Your Journey to Success
- Cognitive rethinking, fear of failure & Managing Life and Personal Factors
- confidence and hard work, levels of motivation
- Inner hero, stepping forward and self-care

WA Community posts – motivational posts, marketing of webinars i.e mental health and wellness

moodle module

resources: presentations, recordings, literature, infographics, workbooks, self help guides, reflections, webinars etc

Multiple **group sessions** planned
Uptake poor

Stress management and learning to be organized, Study/life balance and limiting distractions

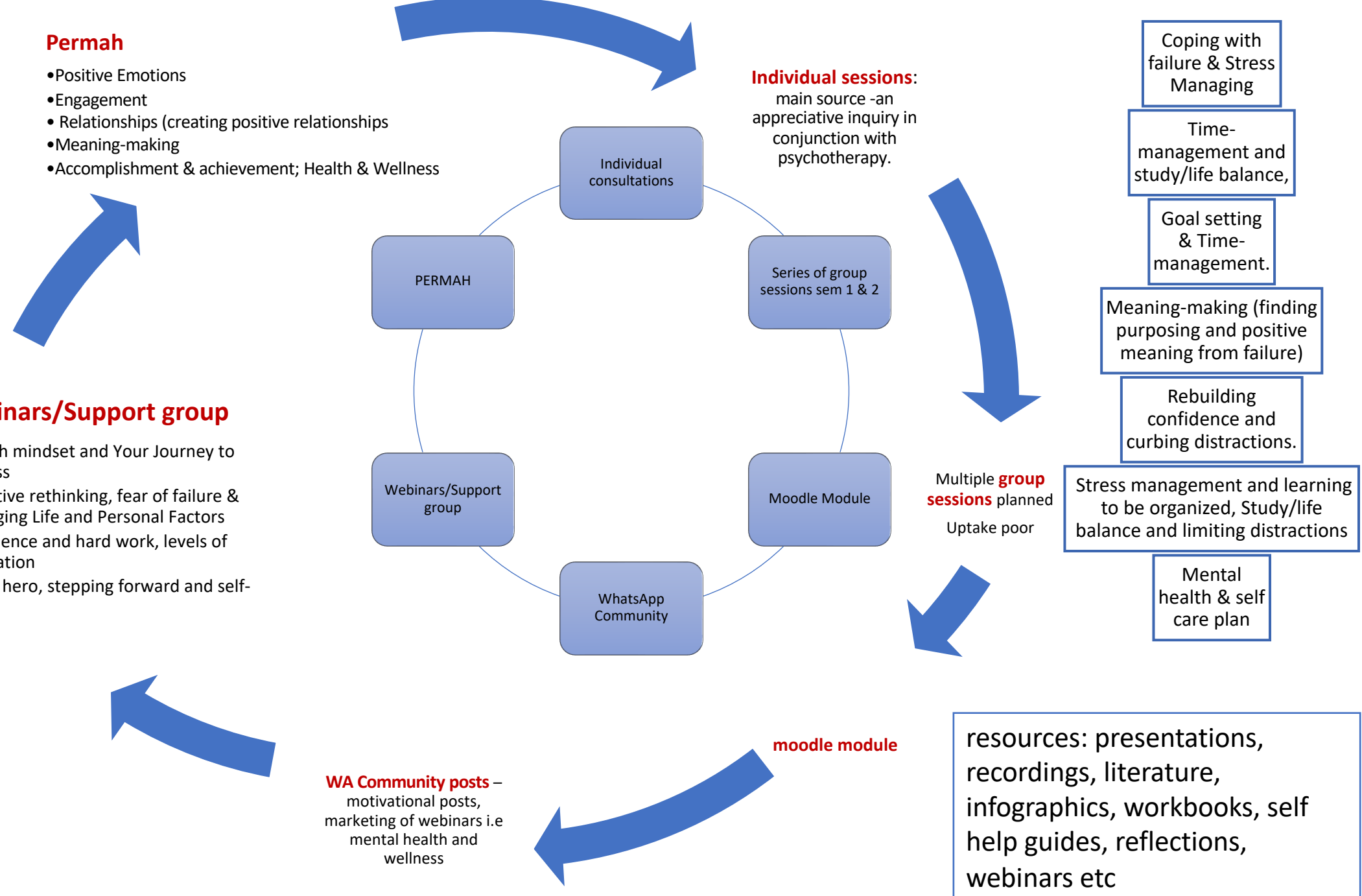
Rebuilding confidence and curbing distractions.

Meaning-making (finding purposing and positive meaning from failure)

Goal setting & Time-management.

Time-management and study/life balance,

Coping with failure & Stress Managing



Semester 2 (2020) & Semester 1 (2021)			Semester 2 (2021)		2022 & 2023
Session 1: 9 th November	Session 1: 12 April	Feedback on Aiming for Success Introduction to transition and adjustment, Finding the balance btw academics, personal and familial demands	Session 1: 16 August	Welcome and introductions Meet and greet Exploring their Narrative Services and AFS project overview Reminder to complete the Aiming for Success	Introduction and welcome, AFS program and Mental Health and Wellness, and Self-Care
Session 2: 16 th November	Session 2: 19 April	Coping with fear of failure, coping with online learning	Session 2: 23 August	Your Risk Status Commitment and Being your Best Academic Self Making time for Self-care practices Homework	
Session 3: 30 th November	Session 3: 3 May	Study techniques and facilitating learning approaches Test and Exam Skill development	Session 3: 30 August	Confidence & Self-esteem Self-care plan and support – Mental Health and Wellness	Inner thoughts, beliefs and actions, Managing life and personal factors
Session 4: Evaluation – 7 th December	Session 4: Evaluation – 10 May	Where are you now? What have you done? Levels of confidence/readiness for exams	Session 4: 6 September	Fear of Failure Strategies to succeed with Online Learning Habits Study techniques and facilitating learning approaches	Lifestyle Habits, Study and stress management strategies
			Session 5: 13 September	Refining your Stress Management strategies: Caring for yourself Independent Development Care Plan	Fear of failure, Hard work and Confidence unpacked, and termination

INSPIRING GREATNESS

STUDENT

VOICE

I'm **mentality exhausted** most of the time, i was hoping that by this time I'll be ahead of where I'm at right now, **failing** a module makes me **feel worse**... i love what I'm studying, but shame so much has been **taken away** from me emotionally, my **self esteem** is way **low**, I'm fear going to an exam room coz im **scared** i might fail again. its **just too much**. i try to re-motivate myself, but i find myself in a **dark space** every now and again.

I was hoping that at this stage I'd be excited to almost be done with this degree, that I'd have made friends and that my family would be excited that I'm about to help with different responsibilities...**as it stands I'm just a heavy burden to them financially.**

S T U D E N T

V O I C E

I'd like a **motivation buddy**.
Someone who has the same or similar goals as I do. Someone who will motivate me to study when I want to binge series. Someone who is willing to let me to vent to them about class work and test. I would also do the same and support them too. Basically we would help and encourage each other to achieve our goals.

I just really need to do more in terms of **dedicating more time for my studies**. the problem is that everytime I try to study I just start to panic and stress that I will forget all I'm trying to study. **I need to start believing more in myself.**

STUDENT

VOICE

I've telling myself that it is **normal** and I'm **still finding ways to cope** with university life. I haven't spoke with anyone

I am doing **much better** now with my studies **but** I am spending a lot of time on my studies and **feeling overwhelmed** that I am not able to do much around the house

I am a mom and that is hard to do my mother duties but I am **COMMITTED** to my studies

i have recently started , **speaking positivity** to myself before starting a task , 'that it is okay' all i have to do is calm down and try my best in that activity

Taking the time to make sure that you are always doing well.. **Mentally, physically and emotionally**

STUDENT

VOICE

With Exams coming up, **fear of failing is really overwhelming**

Realising that you're stressed and overwhelmed in such a way that you **just can't function** but to you stress more and do nothing

being an at risk student is pushing my stress level through the ROOF 🤔

i feel like this experience for me has **taught me so much about me**. You know like an **elastic band**, how far can i stretch. its been hard and tough for me immensely but i am **grateful for the support**.

too often i feel i have **let myself down**.

I like to think about myself as someone who **charges their phone and then takes it off the charger because they need to use it**. I try to take some time off and relax but then I feel **guilty** for that so I go back to doing work.

S T U D E N T

V O I C E

last week I mentioned how I'm going to start cleaning my working space, it's **been working wonders for me**. I've also started doing **morning brisk walks** and I've learnt that my **day starts much brighter** when I do this. taking some time in the morning and evening to **meditate** makes me feel better and also helps to put so many things in **perspective**

have been giving myself **small rewards** for my academic achievements, like buying or going to a place I love. This helps me **pay attention and acknowledge my wins and boosts my confidence**. I also **involve my parents** as much as I can in my academic journey. I share weekly schedules, let them know when I am stressed or doing well. This has helped me **stop isolating myself** and dealing with my problems alone

If you have to describe the impact this programme has had on you, what would it be?

STUDENT

VOICE

- it has **increased my self esteem**, I have believed in myself again, I have learnt how to **manage my time**
- **Uplifting** is the word that best describes my feelings through the program
- It has **motivated** me to **not lose hope**, focus more on my **mental health and academics**
- It allowed me to feel, feel all the motions i was shying away from. it allowed me **confront myself** with a lot my WEAKNESSESS

it has gave me **hope** and the **will to do well**

I learnt that **everyone fails** at something, it's all about **how you get up**

gave me a different **mindset** towards my career and that **I can do it**

A very **huge impact**, being more **confident** in my self, gave me **hope** that I can always do better

INSPIRING GREATNESS

STUDENT VOICE

“The activities are quite **exciting** and **fun to do**. They **stimulate** my mind to think better”

“It is **very interactive** and hope to have **more** activities”

“They were **very educational**”

“Most resources and assignments give me time to **reflect and think** about many things I wouldn’t think about on a normal day of life”.

“it was a great experience it was like **having a chat with my inner self**”.

S T U D E N T

V O I C E

"After careful analysis of the sessions, I have realised that they are **structured by concepts**. These concepts from sessions 1 to 4 are **building blocks**, with each session adding on to the next to give yourself the **ultimate superhero you were searching for within yourself**. I loved the way they were structured. I will continue watching them to unlock further concepts and links each session offers to **build myself into a superhero not limited to a specific superpower**."

"I have been made aware again that confidence is directly affected by your self esteem. The tools, methods for **improving self confidence is what I will be implementing** in order to achieve higher self confidence.

"Learning that self **confidence and self esteem is codependent** was insightful. Understanding that self confidence is a quality that begins and ends with me and builds up by **self awareness, positivity, gratitude, self acceptance**. Having self confidence is the ability to confide in myself whether it's my abilities, strengths and weaknesses."

"Negative thinking and fear of failure are things we all change. I have learned that imposter syndrome is a real phenomenon and I have been putting steps in place to change my situation. This session has given me the **strength to challenge myself** in the aspects discussed."

"I have realised that the fear of failing is hindering the way in which I am facing my challenges. Fear is not something I want standing in my way therefore the concepts explained in the session made me understand **how to deal with fear of failure and identify it**."

"I've learned that **mental health is a continuum** and not an absolute. I've also realised that my productivity tools, methods, my physical health is impacting on the way I approach challenges experienced in my personal and academic life. So I am reflecting on ways to **improve this**."

"Allowed me the opportunity to **channel my negative thoughts into positive thoughts**. I am trying re-establish the purpose of studying medicine and I found this session to be helpful in

INSPIRING GREATNESS

Cohort Analysis

Yr	Intake	Graduated		Excluded		Dropped out		Continuing	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
2018	1023	810	79%	30	3%	118	12%	65	6%
2019	1074	574	53%	17	2%	224	21%	259	24%
2020	959	499	52%	13	1%	138	14%	309	32%
2021	979	164	17%	4	0%	116	12%	695	71%
2022	922	3	0%	5	1%	92	10%	822	89%
2023	1035	0	0%	0	0%	74	7%	961	93%

July 2023 DEGREE/ SCHOOL	Students referred to CAECOM	Readmitted	Students referred to AECOM
SHS	5	4	1
B-NUR	1	1	0
MBCHB	1	1	0
TOTAL	7	6	1

Dec 2023 DEGREE/ SCHOOL	Students referred to CAECOM	Readmitted	Students referred to AECOM
SHS	4	4	
B-NUR	2	3	0
LMMS	5	2	3
MBCHB	4	1	3
TOTAL	15	10	6

FINDINGS



INSPIRING GREATNESS

CONCLUSION

CONQUER THE BIG HARD TASK



Insight and accountability is essential in moving beyond a negative term decision, and once embraced... it can be conquered

1. Hit the Road

2. Take control

3. Accelerate

QUESTIONS?



**Student
Support Services**

Access free, professional and confidential counseling

**Monday - Friday
08h00 - 16h30**

**Toll Free Line
080 080 0017**

chs.sss@ukzn.ac.za