



COUNSELLING & PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES BULLETIN

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MESSAGE FROM THE HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

As finals approach, we know this can be a time of pressure and uncertainty. Balancing academic demands with your mental well-being can be challenging, and it is completely normal to feel overwhelmed. This bulletin offers simple tools, practical reminders, and supportive insights to help you navigate this period with greater clarity and emotional care.

Inside, you will find guidance on staying calm, the role of resilience, hope, and faith during stressful times, an introduction to colour psychology, and other helpful ideas designed to support you throughout this busy period.

At Counselling and Psychological Services (CAPS), our mission is to foster a supportive environment where you can thrive not only in your studies but also in your mental and emotional health. This bulletin is part of that effort, and we hope it brings you strength, balance, and encouragement as you prepare for your exams. As always, our doors are open, and we are here to support you every step of the way.

Many Thanks,
Dr. Tahira Haider

HOW TO SAVE YOUR BRAIN ENERGY WITH MICRO-DECISIONS?

Areej Salik Virk



We often blame exhaustion on long hours or a packed schedule - but sometimes, it's the tiny, constant choices that wear us out. From picking what to wear, when to study, or which app to open first, these micro-decisions chip away at our mental energy without us even realizing it. This mental drain is called decision fatigue, and it builds up faster than you think.



THE QUIET BURNOUT

The brain has a limited capacity for decision-making each day. When it's spent on low-impact choices, we're left with less focus for the things that really matter - like classes, assignments, or social life. As university students, juggling academics and everything in between, cutting down unnecessary choices can help us stay sharp and stress-free.

SO HOW DO WE FIX IT?

Start by simplifying:

Stick to routines, plan your meals and outfits ahead of time, and use to-do lists to avoid wasting energy on “what’s next?” questions.

Keep your digital space clean- fewer tabs, fewer apps - and give your brain short breaks throughout the day. The goal isn’t to be rigid, but to free up headspace for the decisions that actually count.

You don't need to make fewer decisions - just make fewer unnecessary ones.

Psychology of Color :

How Your Environment Affects Your Mood

Nimra Arshad



Have you ever walked into a classroom, café, or even your own room and suddenly felt calm, energized, or maybe even distracted?

That's not random—it's the power of color. The colors around us affect how we think, feel, and behave, often without us noticing.

Have you ever walked into a classroom, café, or even your own room and suddenly felt calm, energized, or maybe even distracted? That's not random—it's the power of color. The colors around us affect how we think, feel, and behave, often without us noticing.

Cool colors such as blue, green, and purple create calmness. Blue helps with focus and reduces stress, which is why many study apps and websites use it in their designs. Adding a blue lamp or folder to your study corner can keep you relaxed during late-night sessions. Green reminds us of nature and refreshes the mind—having a small plant on your desk or using a green highlighter can reduce tension. Purple shades boost creativity and imagination, making them great for art projects or creative writing.



Warm colors like red, orange, and yellow bring energy and excitement. Red makes you alert and active, which is why it's often used in sports or ads. Yellow is linked to positivity and creativity, making it perfect for group work or brainstorming ideas. Try using yellow sticky notes while studying—they can brighten your desk and your mood. But be careful, too much of these bright shades can feel overwhelming and even distracting.

Neutral colors like white, beige, and gray are clean and simple, which is why they're common in classrooms and dorms. But if used alone, they can feel boring. To avoid this, mix them with brighter accessories—like a colorful cushion, rug, or motivational posters. Even small touches can transform a plain space into one that inspires you.



For students, color psychology is like a secret study tool. Need energy in the morning? Wear a bright red hoodie to class. Feeling stressed before a presentation? Use calming blue slides in your PowerPoint. Want to stay focused? Study by a green wall or park bench. Even your stationery can make a difference—yellow pens for creative ideas, blue pens for calm note-taking, or purple notebooks for inspiration.

Moreover, for students, using the psychology of color can be a smart study hack. If you're cramming late at night, keep a yellow notepad or orange sticky notes nearby to stay energized. Before exams, try reviewing your notes in a calm blue or green space—like sitting near a window with plants. When working on creative assignments, grab a purple notebook or use colorful markers to spark fresh ideas. Even small choices, like wearing a bright hoodie on a dull morning or decorating your dorm wall with motivational posters, can change your mood and help you perform better in class.



In short, colors are more than decoration—they silently shape your emotions, motivation, and focus. By choosing the right colors in your room, clothes, or study tools, you can create an environment that helps you learn better, relax more, and stay motivated all year.

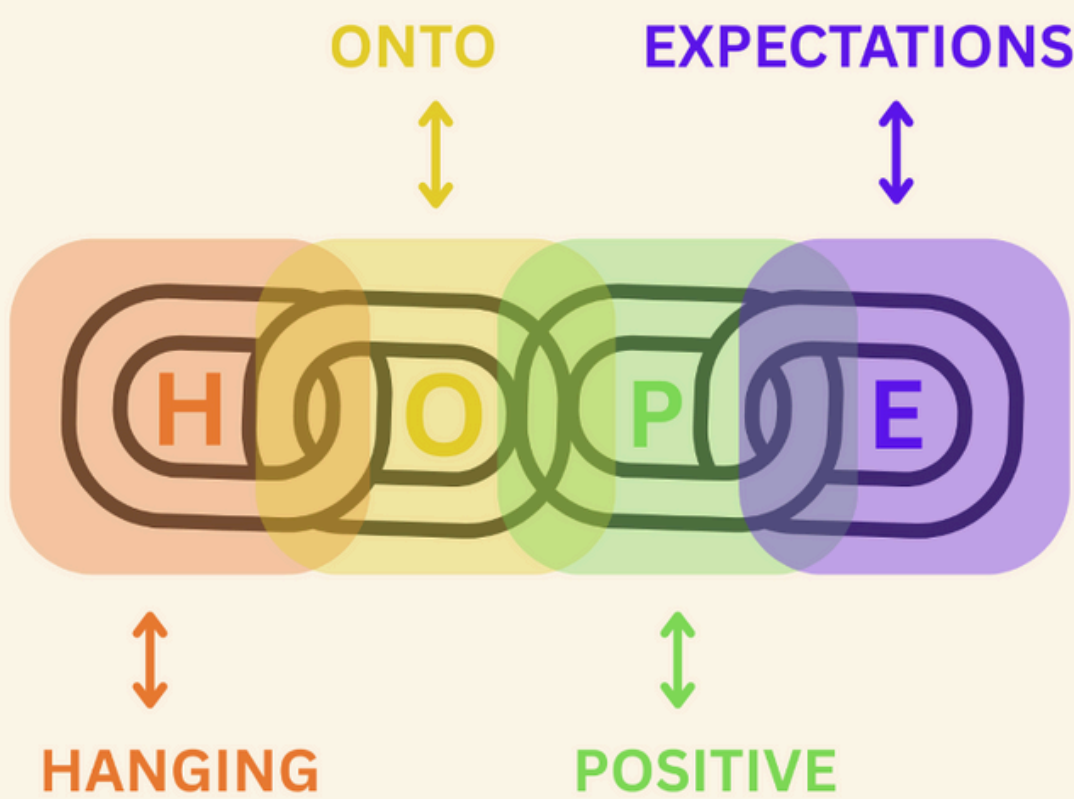
Faith, Hope, and Resilience:

How Spirituality Helps Us Bounce Back by

Muqadas Imtiaz

University life is full of highs and lows—stressful exams, uncertain career paths, and personal challenges. At times, the weight can feel unbearable.

Yet many students discover an inner strength that helps them rise again: faith, hope, and resilience. Spirituality does not erase hardships, but it transforms the way we endure them—turning pain into purpose and setbacks into stepping stones.



Faith as a Source of Strength

Faith offers stability when life feels overwhelming. Believing in a higher plan can ease the burden of failure. Psychology calls this meaning-making: the ability to connect struggles to a bigger purpose. In the Qur’an, Allah reminds us:

“Indeed, with hardship comes ease.” (Qur’an 94:6)

This promise from the Quran reassures us that no difficulty is permanent. From a psychological perspective, this hope reduces stress and nurtures perseverance, much like the research of Kenneth Pargament, who found that spiritual coping helps individuals manage crises more effectively.

Hope as a Motivator

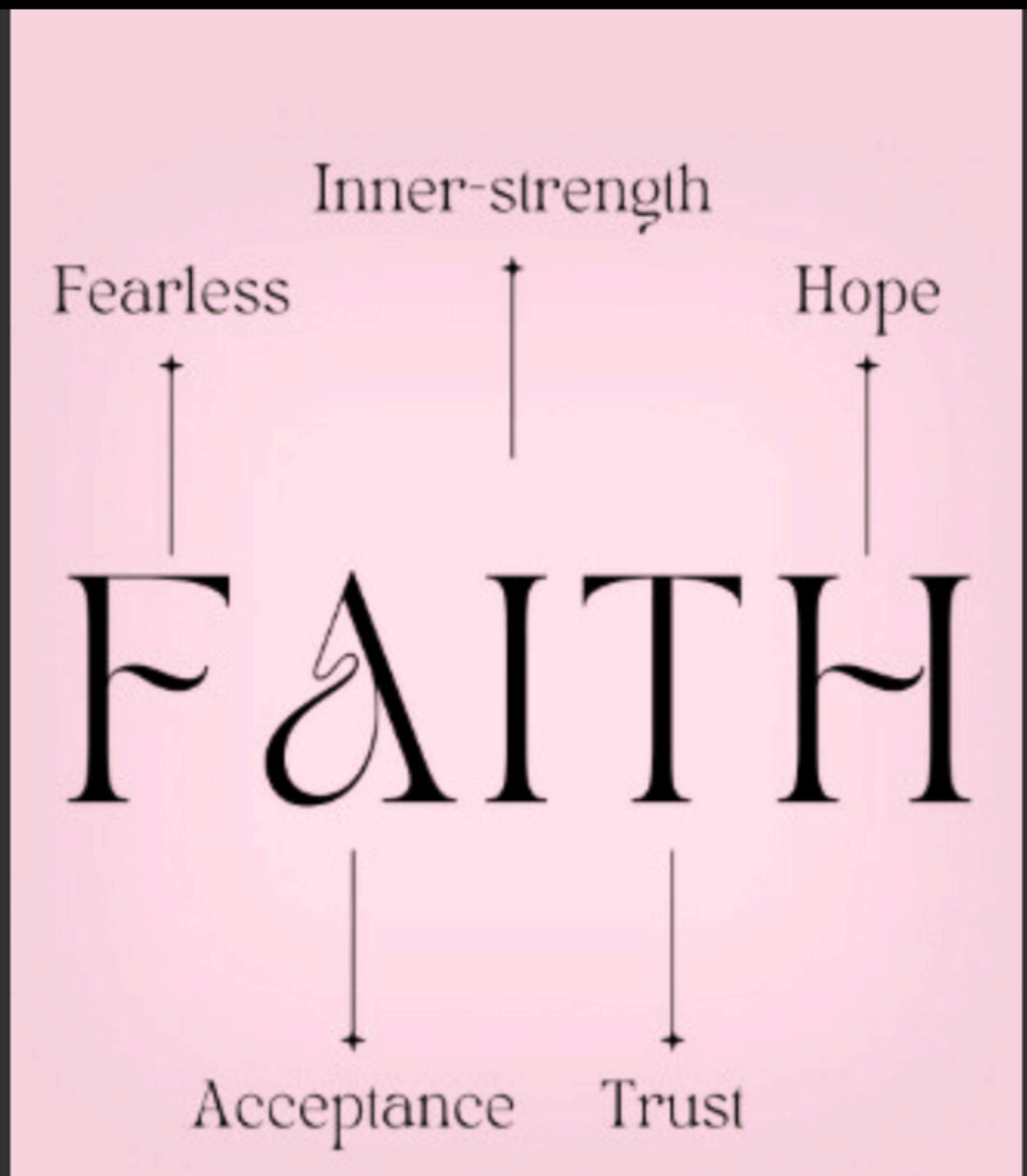
Hope is not just wishful thinking—it’s a mindset that keeps us moving. Students who cultivate hope are more likely to set meaningful goals and persist despite setbacks. Spiritually, hope is nurtured by prayer, reflection, and community. The Qur’an beautifully captures this spirit:

“Do not despair of the mercy of Allah.” (Qur’an 39:53)

Just as psychologists highlight hope as a core factor in resilience, this verse encourages us to look beyond today’s struggles with optimism and faith in divine mercy.

Building Resilience Through Spiritual Practices

Simple daily practices can strengthen resilience: prayer, gratitude journaling, mindful breathing, or connecting with a supportive circle. Research shows these habits lower stress and improve emotional health. Spiritually, they are reminders that we are never alone—both faith and community carry us when life feels heavy.



Bouncing Back, Stronger

Resilience is not about avoiding pain or ignoring your problems, but growing through it. Faith grounds us, hope pushes us forward, and resilience turns wounds into wisdom. As students, nurturing spirituality alongside academics reassures not only success in university life, but also builds lives of strength, compassion, and balance.

HOW TO BUILD RESILIENCE

Embrace change



Focus on what you can control



Keep things in perspective



Minimize catastrophizing



Don't dwell on negative thinking



Take action & be proactive



Establish a support network



Remain hopeful



Practice gratitude



Ask for & accept help



Manage emotions healthily



Know your strengths



Have a sense of humor



Believe in yourself

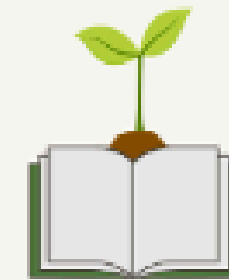


Keep it up!



Faith, Hope and Resilience: How Spirituality Help Us Bounce Back

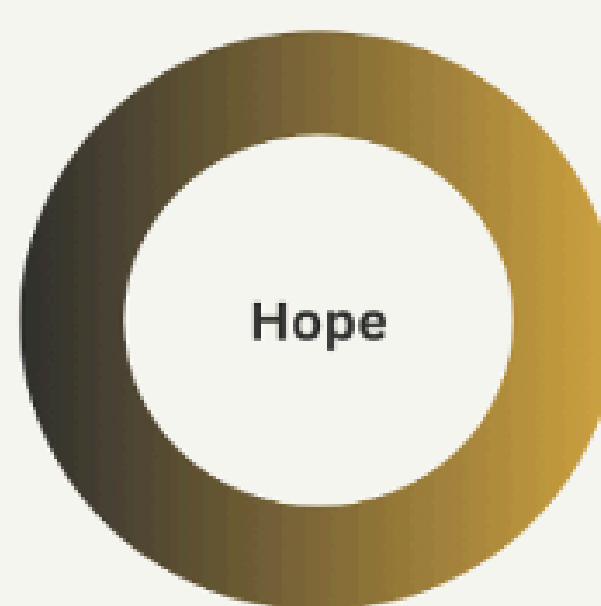
University Life= Stress, Pressure, Uncertainty
Spirituality= Anchor for Mental Health



3 Pillars of Strength



- Gives meaning to struggles
- Encourages patience (sabr) and trust (tawakkul)



- Nurtures optimism
- Motivates us to set goals and persist

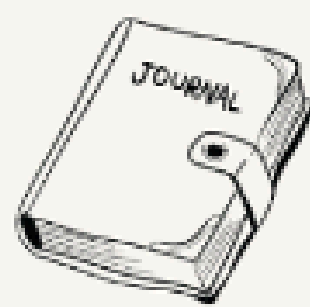


- Bouncing back stronger
- Turning struggles into growth

Practical Practices



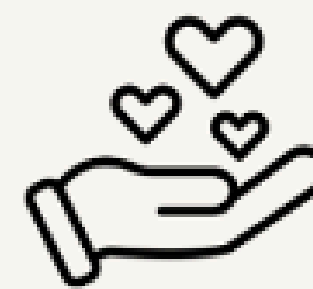
Prayer/Meditation



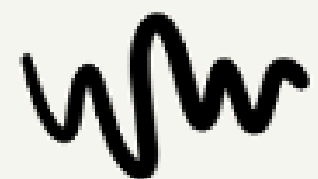
Reflection/Journaling



Supportive Community



Gratitude Practice



Mindful Breathing

Takeaway

"Psychology and Islamic wisdom are not opposites—they complement each other, guiding us toward balance, meaning, and resilience."

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF PROCRASTINATION:

BY: RAMEEN SHEIKH

WHY YOU DELAY AND HOW TO OUTSMART YOURSELF

Done with the assignment you swore you'd get done with yesterday before lunch? Oh no! This morning, you were sure you would submit it. But instead, in the evening, you were scrolling through a 'Nothing beats a Jet2 holiday' reel on Instagram. Stuck in this spiral? This so-called cycle is nothing but the mighty procrastination.

Why we DELAY:

We often blame ourselves for being a 'couch potato' but psychologists agree that procrastination is not a time-management issue, rather an emotional one. Today, about 20% of adults and 50% of university students face it which can lower grades and increase stress (Tom Kellet, 2025). There are a number of reasons which cause us to delay tasks such as:

Avoiding discomfort: Tasks that feel boring, stressful, or overwhelming trigger procrastination as a way to escape negative emotions.

Fear of failure: When students doubt their ability to succeed, they delay to protect their self-esteem.

Short-term mood repair:

Procrastination provides immediate relief for example scrolling TikTok or chatting with friends feels better in the moment, even if it creates more stress later.

Preference for instant rewards:

Humans naturally prioritize short-term pleasure over long-term goals. This "present bias" makes procrastination more likely.

How to Outsmart Yourself :

The good news is if your procrastination is tricking you, the key is to trick it back like a genius.

Shrink the task. Big projects feel impossible, so break them into bite-sized steps. Finishing one small piece builds momentum.

The 5-minute rule: Promise yourself you'll work for just five minutes. Once you start, your brain usually keeps going.

Design your environment:

Remove easy distractions: silence notifications, keep your phone out of reach, or study with a focused friend.

Reward progress, not perfection:

Celebrate small wins such as checking off a reading or writing a paragraph, rather than waiting for the "final product".



FROM PERFECT TO POSSIBLE: CHOOSING PROGRESS IN STUDENT LIFE

Shifa Arshad



Perfectionism: It is a paradox that has enveloped more people than you might think, and especially in student life, it manifests itself in a multitude of ways

Before we talk about the topic, it's important to understand how it affects us. Along with outside pressures, one major challenge comes from within us—perfectionism. We set extremely high standards for ourselves, and when we fail to meet them, we feel stressed, disappointed, and unhappy.



Ever wonder why we put so much pressure on ourselves? Slowly, we start believing that our worth depends on our grades, achievements, and how productive we are. This belief often forms without us realizing it. It grows from family expectations, constant comparison on social media, and an education system that measures our value through success. With time, we end up treating ourselves with the same harsh standards the world places on us.

So, what is perfectionism really about?

At first glance, it may seem like a positive trait—but when it becomes extreme, it starts affecting our mental health and well-being.

- **Misleading:** It looks healthy, but it often becomes harmful.
- **Shame:** Creates guilt, self-criticism, and emotional distress.
- **Self-Esteem:** Slowly weakens confidence and self-worth.
- **Burnout:** Leads to overworking and ignoring rest.
- **Well-Being:** Negatively impacts mental and emotional health.



One surprising downside of perfectionism is procrastination. Even though it sounds counterintuitive, research shows that higher perfectionistic concerns are strongly linked with delaying tasks (Xie et al., 2018). Other studies have found that people who demand perfection from themselves often end up being less productive, not more (Sherry et al., 2010).

Now that we have established that such perfectionism, when unchecked, debilitates both our mental health and productivity alike, let's look at how we can improve it. POV: You are a student and find yourself in a competitive university, such as LUMS, which challenges you on a daily basis, whether it be academics, extracurricular activities, or your personal life. It is also understandable to feel inadequate when we perceive that everyone around us is significantly more accomplished and intelligent than us. However, this is simply not true, and most students tend to feel the same way about themselves.



Now you may ask, how do we salvage ourselves from feeling this way? The trick is to start with small, consistent efforts built over time. For example, instead of leaving the entire preparation of an exam till the last day, yet stressing about how to pass it perfectly, dedicate a small amount of time each day for a week to the exam, and watch how your confidence grows! As clichéd as this sounds, it yields excellent results. Most prominently, you feel great about yourself because instead of worrying about how to achieve your goal in the most perfect way possible (which is exhausting !!!), and in this process, much of your energy goes into it; you are actively taking steps to attain your goal, which is exactly the definition of productivity.

As students, we need this shift from perfection to progress because our academic life is fast-paced and demanding.

Focusing on sustainable growth:

- Helps us perform better without burning out.
- Helps us achieve goals more efficiently with less stress
- Builds a more positive and motivated mindset toward academics
- Shifts focus from getting everything perfect to making steady progress
- Develops consistent study habits that support long-term success
- Teaches true discipline—working hard while being kind to ourselves
- Supports a balanced, healthy, and well-rounded student life





Sleep and **MENTAL HEALTH**

HAMNA BUTT

Benefits of Good Sleep

- **Better focus and memory**
- **Improved stress resilience**
- **Reduced risk of mood disorders**
- **Better academic performance**

What Happens When We Don't Sleep Enough?

- **More emotional reactivity**
- **Impaired decision making**
- **Decline in cognitive performance**

**COLLEGE STUDENTS WHO SLEEP LESS
THAN 6 HOURS A NIGHT ARE MORE
LIKELY TO REPORT SYMPTOMS OF
ANXIETY AND DEPRESSION
(LUND ET AL., 2010)**

Quick Tips for Better Sleep

- **Stick to a consistent sleep schedule**
- **Limit caffeine & screens before bed**
- **Create a relaxing bedtime routine**
- **Keep bedroom dark, cool, and quiet**

**SLEEP RESTORES THE MIND BEFORE IT
RESTORES THE BODY**



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