

varied nourishment



We all have human needs - meeting them in balance is what enables us to thrive and achieve.

PSYCHOLOGICAL

The Human Givens theory outlines the emotional and social needs we all have including:

- **Security & safety** - feeling free from harm
- **Autonomy & control** - feeling in control of most of our actions/choices & being able to let go
- **Competence & achievement** - feeling good at something
- **Meaning & purpose** - feeling driven by something bigger than ourselves
- **Friendship, love, fun, & physical intimacy**
- **Attention** - feeling connected to others
- **Emotional intimacy** - feeling known and accepted for who we are by someone else
- **Connection to a wider community** - feeling a part of a connected group
- **Privacy** - having time to ourselves to process, consolidate learning, & reflect
- **Status in social groupings** - understanding what is expected of us & how to fit in

PHYSICAL

Meeting our physical needs has a demonstrated impact on our wellbeing and academics:

- **Movement** - exercise improves concentration, creativity, learning & academic performance; reduces stress levels; & improves nervous system regulation.
- **Food** - a healthy, balanced diet (think fruits, veggies, some whole grains) improves concentration, memory, academic achievement, & emotional wellbeing. A diet high on caffeine, sugar, & fat can impair memory & cognitive functioning & contribute to anxiety & low mood. Watch out for diet culture pressures to limit these in the extreme though! Sugar & fat are essential for our brains & bodies also, like many things they just serve us better with moderation.
- **Hydration** - in a study some students showed 10% boosted exam performance by being hydrated.
- **Sunlight** - studies show sunlight has a significant impact on learning & performance
- **Sleep** is essential! See sleep resource for more.

FEEDING YOUR BRAIN

Taking time to meet your needs *isn't* a distraction from working, **it's a vital part of the work as it's what gives your brain the power to do the learning, thinking, and creating you're aiming for!**

- ✦ **Eat regular meals and snacks** that make you feel good throughout the day - hunger is a stress signal that triggers your nervous system and reduces your ability to learn. Eating on a regular schedule also helps your body set it's internal clock which improves sleep.
- ✦ **Spend time with friends & loved ones.**
- ✦ **Move your body** - take short breaks to stretch, work in different places throughout the day to add in walks, play a game or go to an exercise class.
- ✦ **Connect to your interests** - listen to music, watch something that makes you laugh, read or learn something just for fun - what makes you feel alive and curious?
- ✦ **Get some sunlight** - being in the sunshine in the morning & throughout the day improves motivation, concentration, & sleep.