

**Astrea Open Table: The SEEDS of Resilience**  
**Session Summary from 23 October**

Our first hour-long Open Table session of the year gave us an opportunity to reflect on and develop the ideas presented to us by Catherine McAteer, Head of Student Psychological Services, in our Astrea network event on 25 September (Boost Your Resilience at Work).

We considered each of the SEEDS that Catherine identified as contributing to our resilience, and identified the challenges faced in achieving beneficial levels of each one. We also captured some tips to share across the network.

Feel free to have a go at the SEEDS wordsearch as well – words may be placed horizontally, vertically, or diagonally, forwards or backwards, but they're all there, we promise!

**Social networks | Exercise | Education | Diet | Sleep**

S E K A V I W E H N J U G X I  
Q K W E R M S W M O Y G C M D  
O W R G P I X D D I I R U H Q  
V N X O C Q J L P T M M L U N  
Q L T R W X Z D O A F H U J R  
O L E E E T O H M C Z A H M L  
O X B S L E E P G U A L C N L  
E V B H J K L N C D D U O G Q  
S M I U F R G W L E W L C I T  
X N Z I C L X N L A S K J H H  
J N X O P I N V U B I T G H F  
D H X V J S B J C S T C N D J  
R I A V Y H N W Q Y M G O U T  
Q M E H D J Z C C M U I M S H  
R F P T U A R W H Q S F B G O

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<b>SEEDS</b>	<b>CHALLENGES</b>	<b>TIPS</b>
<b>SOCIAL NETWORKS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Managing time and energy inside work vs outside work</li> <li>• Socialising with old friends vs meeting new people</li> <li>• Moving jobs / cities</li> <li>• Finding time to fit it all in</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commit to making the effort, be organised and plan ahead</li> <li>• Keep up with social media – but don't let this become a replacement for face to face social interaction</li> <li>• Identify what you enjoy and do it – you should be able to meet like-minded people that way</li> <li>• Explore staff associations and lunchtime events</li> <li>• Some student associations are also open to staff – just ask</li> <li>• Try to avoid childcare responsibilities becoming a barrier to your social life</li> <li>• Don't feel pressured- do what you're comfortable with</li> </ul>
<b>EXERCISE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What if there isn't any exercise you enjoy?</li> <li>• Finding the time to fit exercise into already busy schedules</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Find something that fits into your working day (i.e. stop taking the tube)</li> <li>• Combine with social network (running club/park run/team sports)</li> <li>• Find time/make time to discover what's available in your area (work and home)</li> <li>• Doesn't have to cost a lot (check out UCL societies (dance, yoga))</li> <li>• Make it a habit (otherwise too easy to avoid)</li> <li>• Combining exercise with socialising (e.g. go with a friend/family member)</li> <li>• Using software to remind yourself to move from your computer at regular intervals e.g. walk to the water cooler</li> <li>• Choose something fun! (e.g. zumba)</li> <li>• Activities at lunchtime, (e.g. skipping, walking)</li> <li>• Barry's Bootcamp (Euston Road)</li> <li>• Doesn't have to be formal- wii fit/ exercise DVD at home</li> <li>• Find music to run to</li> </ul>

<p><b>EDUCATION</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How do we define education? Traditional academic (lectures) vs career development qualifications (project management) vs other skills (Becoming a mother)- all could be considered education.</li> <li>• Work-life balance- particularly if you have a family</li> <li>• Child/carer responsibilities mean traditional education routes are difficult as you are time-poor</li> <li>• However, not always a barrier- as a mother/carer you are gaining skills and you have the opportunity to take short online taster courses to learn and develop, e.g. Learning to programme or a language.</li> <li>• Pressure to constantly develop new skills and expertise in order to stay ahead- can be exhausting/off-putting</li> <li>• In terms of professional development there are so many courses available (especially at UCL)- Which one is the right one?</li> <li>• Work-life balance- particularly if you have a family</li> <li>• Cost of education can be high</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Think about where you want to be- is the course/are the skills worth it?</li> <li>• Stay focused on what you're interested in rather than ticking boxes</li> <li>• New skills should be enjoyable and excite you- not just to fill up your CV</li> <li>• Stay fluid and open-minded</li> <li>• Don't be afraid to take the non-traditional route to your chosen career- chances are you are bringing new skills nobody else has.</li> <li>• Education does not have to be a formal qualification- wider life experiences teach valuable skills.</li> <li>• Conversation clubs</li> <li>• Suggested platforms: lynda.com; future learn courses (flexible, online training); OSD training courses</li> <li>• Be the educator: Coaching and mentoring courses to teach your skills to others.</li> </ul>
<p><b>DIET</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cultural barriers, for example alcohol at the pub or alongside dinner – can be awkward if you are not a drinker</li> <li>• Timing can be hard – you tend to eat badly when you feel tired/haven't time to cook</li> <li>• 'Emotional' eating – bingeing when tired etc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meal plan and schedule good delivery orders</li> <li>• Understand the motivations behind your food choices</li> <li>• Eat depending on the need and context ie eat more if you will be doing physical activity, less if sedentary</li> <li>• Find recipes for easy meals for use in uncertain situations for example when you and a partner are on different schedules but both need to eat! Or just so you can eat healthily easily.</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Timing – try to keep to a regular pattern with eating whether 3 main meals or 5 small meals</li> <li>• Own it if you are teetotal – if you're self-deprecating people won't think you're judging them!</li> <li>• Remember meals influence wellbeing so eat well</li> <li>• Don't shop when you're hungry</li> <li>• Educate yourself on nutritional content</li> <li>• Don't go cold turkey with any kind of diet – take baby steps</li> <li>• Make packed lunches from leftovers (and cook in big batches)</li> <li>• Take a fun cookery course – may also help with social networking</li> <li>• Leave your desk to eat at lunchtime so you're breaking too.</li> <li>• Eat your veg!</li> </ul>
<p><b>SLEEP</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• difficulty switching off from work</li> <li>• duration versus quality</li> <li>• waking up early</li> <li>• balance between trying to get back to sleep and making lists of the things you're worrying about</li> <li>• different sleeping patterns within one household</li> <li>• winter is harder than other seasons</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• avoid alcohol</li> <li>• don't use any screens (TV/phone/iPad) for at least an hour before going to sleep</li> <li>• don't read career related, self-help, ghost stories, or watch breaking bad</li> <li>• put your phone on "do not disturb"</li> <li>• try an audiobook to help you get to sleep</li> <li>• regulate your sleep routine and practice good sleep hygiene</li> <li>• use a Lumi bodyclock</li> <li>• take regular exercise</li> <li>• use breathing techniques/meditation/mindfulness to help calm your body and your mind</li> <li>• avoid bingeing on TV box sets</li> <li>• try milk-based drinks (melatonin levels can be helpful)</li> </ul>