

The Living Life To The Full course really helped me with my studies...

By: Tvisha Ijner

Peer LLTTF Facilitator – Youth Pilot Project – CMHA Ontario and CMHA Champlain East



Preparing for my residency exam

I have been preparing for my residency exam for a while now. This was a new addition to my routine and I really enjoyed it. However, over time, it got monotonous. I only did things that I absolutely had to, like studying or eating, neglecting things that make me happy like painting and exercising which I hadn't done for months.

I felt stuck

Despite giving up things that I enjoy, I was going nowhere with my preparation, I felt stuck. I started unhealthy binge eating in response to stress and resented going out. Eventually, I spent less time studying, and more time watching TV. A few weeks into this routine created an unhealthy habit. I just couldn't get myself to do anything, and this made me feel worse.

Breaking my unproductive and unhealthy cycle

My Living Life To The Full (LLTTF) lessons came to my rescue. What I learned in LLTTF was so many practical ways to overcome unhealthy habits. I opened the booklets *"I can't be bothered doing anything"* and remembered the importance of balancing our days to rebuild our healthy routine with three key components "Pleasure", "Achievement", and "Closeness". I started reflecting on my day and breaking it down to the activities that helped me versus those that made things worse for me. I gradually introduced things that I had stopped entirely. It hit me that what helped me cope with stress (like eating or watching TV) was now messing me up more. It gave me an opportunity to

review what I had learned in the lesson *"The things you do that mess you up"*. Planning out my daily routine, gave me the courage to get out of my comfort zone. I started focussing on my health, along with my studies making small and realistic changes such as eating healthy, walking and working out on alternate days. I didn't do anything drastic because I didn't want to fall back into my previous state. One step at a time. Another important lesson I have learned from LLTTF.

Selfcare and enjoyment without guilt

Because these changes made me feel happier, it was easier to anchor the habits. I am now able to focus better on my studies and enjoy my hobbies without feeling guilty. I won't lie, there are days where I need my comfort food and I want to stay in and rest. I have accepted these to be normal in my journey towards a changing lifestyle, as long as, it doesn't hamper my productivity. I am still working on trying to include painting in my schedule, but I know, the power of the one step at a time. I try to remember the key lessons I learned in LLTTF because it keeps myself aware of my unhealthy pattern. Each time, I am aware of them, I feel like there is always something new to learn and integrate in my life...and learning is certainly something that make me feel very happy.



Canadian Mental
Health Association
Champlain East
Mental health for all

**LIVING LIFE
TO THE FULL**
helping you to help yourself



Canadian Mental
Health Association
Ontario