HAVE YOU GOT THE TIME?!
Background

Having a sense of future is important for helping young people develop direction in their lives. A sense of future involves a sense of hopefulness in regard to one’s future, and creates a positive motivational state in which the individual sets goals for the future and makes plans to meet those goals. A positive sense of future includes the following components: cognitive (positive expectancies about what one will do and what goals will be attained); affective (positive mood or only mild anxiety that serves to activate behaviour); and behavioural (setting goals for the present and the future, identifying pathways to achieve those goals, and problem solving around obstacles).

Setting goals and having a plan for reaching these goals is another crucial component of a sense of future and these are skills that can be developed. Setting goals can be motivating as it gives individuals something to plan for and look forward to. Having goals also provides the opportunity for positive reinforcement from both self and others and for a sense of achievement from having attempted or attained the goals. Goals can be small and short-term or they may be more ambitious and long-term. However, planning is a vital step to achieving those goals. A key skill in planning is time management. Being able to manage time well increases the likelihood that goals will be met, thus leading to a sense of achievement.

In the video the contestants confront a challenge that requires them to think, plan, and problem solve to meet a goal. In this session students will be asked to look at the benefits of managing time well. They will use a practical example to apply planning and time management skills to everyday situations. Time management often requires persistence, self-discipline, prioritising tasks, and setting realistic expectations. In addition, time management requires the ability to predict possible obstacles and problem solve around them and the flexibility to deal with unexpected situations. In the practical example, students will be asked to think about the importance of building personal time and pleasant events into their plans, and also to be aware of time wasters.

Learning outcomes

In this session students:

• Develop strategies to prioritise, plan, and manage activities in their lives
• Use a problem-solving approach to manage time effectively
• Describe the importance of having short-, medium-, and long-term goals, and develop a plan to reach these goals
Key messages

- Setting goals and having a plan for reaching these goals is a crucial component of a sense of future.
- It is important to organise your time effectively so that you can fit in essential activities, as well as scheduling time for pleasant events.
- There are many different strategies or plans that can help you achieve the same goal.
- Planning is a vital step in achieving goals.
- Being able to manage time effectively reduces unnecessary levels of stress and increases the likelihood that goals will be met.

Skills: time management, goal setting, planning for short and longer term goals, problem solving

Session outline

8.1 Video – Episode 8 of Strongbbox
8.2 Discussion
8.3 Activity – Simon’s scenario
8.4 Extra activity – Setting goals
8.5 Out of class activity – Making time

Materials

- Video set at Episode 8
- Photocopy or OHT of Resource 8.1
- Photocopy of Resource 8.2 [optional]
- Photocopy of Resource 8.3 [optional]
- Photocopy or OHT of Resource 8.4
- Scissors, glue, and coloured markers [optional]
Session Plan

8.1 Video – Episode 8 of Strongbbox

What’s happening this week? The contestants are faced with their second last challenge. This task will require some thinking and some planning! Will the contestants rise to the challenge?

14 mins

8.2 Discussion

Learning environment Whole class

Preparation/materials

- No specific requirements

Procedure

1. Discuss with students that the challenge they saw the contestants participate in today centred on having a goal – to assemble the tape recorder in order to decipher the message. In order to achieve the goal the contestants employed different plans to help them reach their goal.

- What were the contestants’ short-term goals for the challenge? (e.g. to win the challenge)
- What are the contestants’ long-term goals for the show? (e.g. to win the competition, etc.)
- What were some of the plans they used to reach their short-term goal? (e.g. no plan, writing it down, using diagrams, etc.)
- Why do you think the contestants chose those particular strategies? (People tend to chose strategies that they are good at or that are consistent with how they approach life, e.g. Adam didn’t use a formal plan, Erin drew a diagram probably because she’s an architecture student, etc.)
- Which strategies seemed to work best?

5 - 10 mins

8.3 Activity – Simon’s scenario

Learning environment Groups of 3 to 4

Preparation/materials

- Photocopy or OHT of Resource 8.1 – Simon’s scenario [1 for each group if photocopied]
- Photocopy of Resource 8.2 – Activity key [if students are going to do it as a cut out, 1 per group. For alternative, see note below]
- Photocopy of Resource 8.3 – Timetable [optional – see note below]
- Photocopy or OHT of Resource 8.4 – Surprise scenario [1 for each group if photocopied]
- Scissors, glue, and coloured markers [optional]

25 - 30 mins
NOTE: As an alternative to using the timetable in the student book, photocopy the timetable (Resource 8.3) to an A3 size sheet of paper for ease of use for students [1 per group]. Students may write on/colour in the timetable, or use blocks of time from the activity key (Resource 8.2). If students are to use cut out blocks, a photocopy of the activity key will also need to be on A3 size paper [1 per group].

Procedure

1. **Suggest** to students that there are many activities that form part of their lives. These activities include:
   - things you can’t change or have to do,
   - things you would like to do but can’t,
   - things you do for fun,
   - things that are really important to you, and
   - things that others [e.g. parents, teachers, etc.] would like you to do.
   Balancing these demands effectively can sometimes be difficult.

2. **Refer** students to page 46 of their books for tips on managing time.

   **Time management tips**

   1. **Identify your goals and priorities.**
   2. **Analyse** how you are spending your time – work out exactly how you spend your time. Creating a log is an effective way of doing this.
   3. **Match** how you are using your time with your priorities – consider if you are spending quality time on your priorities.
   4. **Develop** a plan to spend quality time on your priorities – build a realistic schedule that gives time to the activities that fit with your priorities and will help you reach your goals. You must stick to your time schedule; however, flexibility is necessary to take care of unexpected events. **Allow for buffer time.**
      Don’t forget to include **pleasant activities** when preparing your schedule because this is important to avoid becoming frustrated!

3. **Explain** that students will now have a chance to practise some time management.
   **Hand out** a copy of Resource 8.1 to each group or display as an OHT. **Read out** Simon’s scenario to the class. Tell students that they will have only 10 - 15 minutes for the activity.
4. **Explain** that students need to fill out the activity key for Simon's activities (use either the student book on page 47 or a copy of Resource 8.2). Block in the number of hours Simon needs to spend on the activity using colours or patterns (3 hours for English assignment has been blocked for students as an example).

**NOTE:** Simon's usual weekly activities have already been recorded in the timetable, so students will not have to account for them again when developing the activity key.

5. When the activity key is complete, students can start working on a draft timetable (use either the timetable on page 48 of the student book or a copy of Resource 8.3). If students are not cutting out blocks, a pencil should be used until the timetable is finalised. If they are using blocks, do not glue at this stage.

**NOTE:** Students can block over the times already on the schedule if they feel it necessary.

6. After 10 - 15 minutes of arranging the weekly schedule, **ask** students to finalise the schedule for Monday and Tuesday only (e.g. glue/affix or pen in).

7. When this is done, **present** students with the surprise scenario (hand out Resource 8.4 or OHT). The students are going to have to rearrange the rest of their schedule. Since the scenario occurs on a Wednesday, students can only change the timetable from Wednesday on.

8. **Allow** another 5 minutes for students to rearrange Simon's schedule.

9. As a class, **discuss** some of the issues that arose when scheduling Simon's week.
   - Did you get the schedule to work effectively?
   - Was it realistic?
   - Did Simon meet all of his commitments?
   - Were you able to achieve a balance of work and fun?
   - How did you make decisions about how to fit activities in?
   - What happened when you had to rearrange the schedule? Was this easy or difficult to do?
   - How might a scheduling process like this give you more control over your life?

10. **Summarise:**
    
    *Planning is really important. We become stressed sometimes when we don’t seem to have enough time to do everything we need or want to do. Although planning is helpful, we still need to be flexible with our schedules because unexpected events happen. Maintaining a balance of work and fun is important!*
8.4 Extra activity – Setting goals

**Learning environment**  Whole class then individual

**Preparation/materials**
- No specific requirements

**Procedure**

1. **As a class discuss** the importance of having a plan that sets out the order of approaching a task or achieving a goal. **Introduce** the concept of short-term goals (e.g. the challenge the contestants faced, completing an assignment), medium-term goals (e.g. finishing year 10), and long-term goals (e.g. work, university, TAFE, travel).

2. **Refer** students to page 49 of their books.

3. **Ask** students to write down one short-term goal, one medium-term goal, and one long-term goal in the spaces provided. Students are then to write down the steps they think they will need to take to reach these goals.

4. **Ask** students for a couple of volunteers to share with the class the goals they listed and the plans they identified that would help them to reach those goals.

5. **Discuss** with students that it is important to set goals and to have a plan for how to reach each goal. It is important for students to note that people can have similar goals but very different, yet equally effective, plans for how to reach that goal. Is that okay? Why or why not?

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8.5 Out of class activity – Making time

1. **Refer** students to page 49 of their books.

2. **Instructions:**

   This week you are to develop your own timetable or schedule. But before doing so, have a think about the other timetables that you use on a day-to-day basis, like school and work timetables, etc. Are there any areas in your life that you should have a timetable for but don’t (e.g. study, homework, exercise, chores, pleasant activities, etc.)? Using the skills and knowledge you have gained from today’s session, your out of class activity is to develop a personal timetable for the week. Consider all the activities you participate in, and those you should be doing and construct a realistic timetable to fit them all in. Don’t forget, it is important to allow for buffer time, or flexibility, and to schedule some pleasant activities!

   Remember, keeping to a timetable or schedule might not always be possible, but having a “rough idea” of what you are required to do for a week is extremely helpful for keeping you on track!