

What is normal and what is good - Focusing on your strengths. – April 28th @ 11am

[MUSIC PLAYING]

ISABELLA HENMAN: Good morning, everybody, and welcome to our Student Hub Live broadcast today. My name is Isabella Henman. I'm once again allowed out from behind the computer to be allowed in front of the camera today.

And I promise I'm supposed to be good and not messing about, but I'm just get it in there, chocolate. Dark chocolate. OK, kids. We got it in. We'll talk about chocolate lots, because we like chocolate.

Anyway, so we are talking about what is normal and good today. So we are going to be talking with my guests about normal students. What is normal, do we have that? What is our normal? What's good?

We're going to be talking about all sorts of things like that. So if you haven't been to a Student Hub Live session today-- before-- obviously you are here today-- you'll be able to see things on camera. You can interact as much as you like in the chat. And we've got a number of different people helping in the chat there.

So we've got HJ our stellar supremo who helps us out. And we've also got Helen Wilding and Maryaa Bibi. They are both helping us in the chat today. And you'll be able to see them. Their photos are up on screen at the moment, and they'll be designated by the SHL moniker in front of their name.

Please don't put any personally identifying information in the chat when you're doing it because we are going out live. But you are very welcome to chat to each other, talk about chocolate as long as it's not that rubbishy stuff that some people talk about. White chocolate's not real. Anyway, we do talk about other things other than chocolate. We talk about sensible things.

I've also got a couple of live guests with me today. Lorna Sibbet, who's one of my colleagues in access in a number of different areas. Lovely wave there, Lorna. Thank you. And Jeremy Wilcock, who I haven't personally met, but we've had some lovely chats.

And he is in a different faculty. And I'm sorry, Jeremy. I've just totally forgotten. But that's OK. I'm sure you'll get an introduction a bit more later.

So we're going to be talking through a number of different things today. And what will happen is HJ will be monitoring the chat. I'll come to him with different questions along the time-- along the way. Sorry, I'll try and get my teeth in and talk sensibly. That's the problem about being in front of the camera and not being just in front of a computer.

And apparently I get very giggly. I've already been very giggly today. So it's fine. We like community. Student Hub Live is about community. It's about having fun as well as talking about the study skills. And there you go, I've started waving my hands. I've managed to keep them on my lap so far, but we don't like waving them around.

So we're going to be talking about a number of different things today. If you have questions for us any stage, you can email them into the studio and the email address will handily come up on screen so that I don't have to forget it again, as I always manage to do. But I'm pretty sure it's studenthub@open.ac.uk. If I got it right, bonus for me, extra chocolate later.

So I think that's all of my introduction thing. So what I'm going to do now is I'm going to come onto our first guest, into Jeremy. And we're going to be talking about what is normal. So, often, we have this perception of a normal student, and we have these ideas and we think, I've got to be normal. There is a normal student.

And in fact, we can ask that question of you. What do you think is a normal student? Do you have this perception, this mental image of a normal student? And you can talk about that in the chat. I'll come to HJ a little bit later. So Jeremy, I know that you've got some really good ideas here. This idea about a normal student, I'll stop talking and pass over to you then.

JEREMY WILCOCK: Yeah, Thanks, Isabella. So I suppose if we're thinking about the notion of normal, is it helpful? And it can be helpful to think about the idea of a normal student. Maybe if we're making decisions about whether or not we are actually going to study with the Open University or elsewhere, or when we're making a decision about our qualifications or our modules, we might want to be able to judge ourself about some type of normal.

But I think I'm going to leave it there, actually, in terms of the benefits of normality. It's also interesting to think though, about what we mean by normal. If we mean typical, is there a typical student, then that has certainly changed with the Open University over the years that I've been there in all sorts of ways. I think most notably in terms of the age range of our students, which we have seen decreased quite markedly over the last few years.

But once people start studying with us, we very quickly move away from the notion of there being a normal student, because certainly as tutors, we recognise that everyone has got their own backgrounds, their own experiences, their own motivations. And we try as far as we can to cater our teaching to the individuals and to what they want to get out of their study experience. And we try our hardest to help everyone to succeed. A tutor who's got 20 students, say, in their group, is going to want to get to know all 20 of those people and is going to want to help to teach them as individuals attending to their strengths and weaknesses as far as they can, rather than always teaching to this notion of there being a normal student.

ISABELLA HENMAN: So the individual, that's what I want to pick up from that because this idea of have this perception of normality, or often we do, I think, oh, there's a normal student. And at the Open University, we're not normal anyway, to be honest, because we're a different university. So this idea of individuality, if I can say it properly, do you want to say a little bit more about that, Jeremy, this individual student idea.

JEREMY WILCOCK: Yeah, I mean, obviously there's some things, there are some systems and processes that we all have to conform to. We can't go off willy nilly all the time, if you like, and just chart our own course. But at the same time, I think as a university, and as a group of tutors, and as a number of schools and faculties, we are very good at getting to know our students and really doing the best for them as individuals. I think the way that comes through the strongest is probably through tutor student relationships. And that's where we'll spend a lot of our time, making sure that we can really provide within a given system and within a given set of expectations, the type of individual support the students need.

ISABELLA HENMAN: Yeah. I think that's quite important, this idea. I mean, we talk about normality and strengths, and we'll move on to strengths and building that a bit later. Sometimes we do need to think about what we need and what are we looking for as a student? So I think when we're thinking about a

normal student, I mean I suppose my archetypal idea of a university student is somebody who goes and sits in lecture, sits there writing essays all the time.

And I'm, actually, I'm even writing it by hand because my age. I used to have to write my essays by hand. And we do things like that. So is there anything else about how we are not a normal university that you want to talk about, Jeremy, before we move on?

JEREMY WILCOCK: Yeah. I mean, I won't go into too much detail on this, but certainly our approach to teaching is rather different, isn't it, to other universities? And I suppose the clue's there in our name, isn't it, Isabella, the fact that we are the Open University as well, so the fact that we open our doors to a much greater range of prospective students maybe than conventional HEIs would do.

And that's a real strength of ours, I think. It means that our community is that much more diverse and maybe that much less normal, if there is such a thing, that it brings a real strength and variety to the people that work at the Open University as well as the people that study with us.

ISABELLA HENMAN: That's a lovely idea, this idea of variety. And it's interesting, when you were saying about the student demographics earlier, when we have a lot more of the younger students now, I actually discovered one of my students was in her late 80s the other day. And I thought that was absolutely wonderful because it was, like, fantastic. She's doing a science degree and she's in her 80s.

And she said, great. I was brought up before computers. I can actually do the computing. I can do an online course.

So yes, I know a lot of people who are probably watching this are probably au fait, you're used to watching computers, used to learning online. But some of that is about thinking about what's required. And the Open University and what we're doing, the diversity is probably quite important. And it's also, I wanted to re-bring up this idea of community because that's what we're doing here today.

Student Hub Live is about community. We are the live common room. If you're at a Brit University, you could have gone and done something else. Where the bits were-- you're thinking about all those things, the bit where over a cup of coffee you could have had a chat. OK, I don't drink coffee-- hot cup of hot chocolate-- but anyway, we have the terminology, and the bit where you can chat to people.

So we asked the question earlier, what's your idea of a normal student? HJ, have we had some things coming in there? What have people been saying?

HJ: Oh, yes. We got lots of thoughts and ideas on this one here. So Boss reckons there's no such animal as a normal student, which I think is a great way to put it. Haley says, 'I don't think there's anything normal ever. We're all just so different.' Louise says, 'A normal student is everything I'm not-- clever, organised, understand the question in the EMA.' I know exactly how you feel on that one, Louise.

Christopher said, 'I always thought a normal student was like a prodigy who is fantastic at everything. Well, that's not me.' Lisa said, 'I think especially in the OU there's no such thing-- ages, where people live, their backgrounds. Everything's different about us and I think that's what makes us great.' And Natasha says, 'Thank goodness I've never met a normal student. It must be a scary thing.'

And my picture of a organised student is one that-- a normal student is one that has a very organised desk. They sit at it and they concentrate very hard. That's completely the opposite of me. I'm just a bit of a mess.

But Lisa says, 'My desk is organised because I never seem to end up studying.' [LAUGHS] I know how that feels. And Paul says about neurodiversity as well, is something that can make us different, it can give us strengths, it gives us things to work on as well. So lots thoughts on this in the chat.

ISABELLA HENMAN: Fantastic. Thanks, HJ. And I have to say it because one of your first comments was about the normal student. I promise I'd get this in. Normal student, sabre tooth tiger student. There you go.

We were talking about sabre tooth tigers in our session last night. So I said I'd try and get it in. It's like Rick rolling.

But yeah, OK, I'll be a bit more sensible here. So this neurodiversity idea, it's actually really important. And so Jeremy was mentioning it earlier about the diverse students we've got. But yeah, we have a lot of neurodiverse students.

In fact, my understanding is that as a University we have more students who've got a registered disability than any other higher education institution. And just a little thing on that term disability. It's not a moniker, it's not any kind of derogatory term. It's actually a legal term.

That's why we say to have a registered disability. You may not feel it's a disability and we're not making any judgement. It's just a legal term. Because I know some people get a bit confused about that or think that they're being judged in any way.

But yeah, in terms of neurodiversity, actually, no, it's not part of our thing. But Lorna, I know that you've had some thoughts about this before. So can I just ask you a little bit about neurodiversity in terms of how we support our neurodiverse students for this idea of normality or not?

LORNA SIBBETT: Yeah. You know that I don't think there's any such thing as normal. I'm not a fan of normality. I've always been interested around the edges. But in terms of supporting neurodiversity, let's remember that some of us are neurodiverse, whether diagnosed or not. So it's not just amongst the student body, but amongst the staff that are supporting you.

So you will find that your tutors either actually have a personal connection because they are neurodiverse or they've got family members who might fit on the autism Asperger's sort of spectrum and can be proactive about how they support you, but also, it is something as, Isabella's hinted at there, that as most of tutor body, we talk with one another, we share a resource, we share ideas about how to support our diverse students.

And one of the most rewarding things about our jobs is that we have this most amazing variety of people. Isabella's mentioned the age spectrum. So youngest student might be about 16 and your oldest in the 80s. You've got people across the spectrum of neurodiversity. People who might have limited physical environment but can engage mentally with the full spectrum of activities that the OU offers.

So there is no such thing as the normal student. There's no such thing as the normal tutor either. We are our own beast. And I think that's something to be celebrated. Celebrate it in yourself. Don't aim for mediocrity, normality. You want to be who you are.

And actually, I'll rephrase that a little bit. There's who you are today, and then there's what education and this discovery path that you're on can bring to who you're going to become. So I used to think in terms of University and education as a transition experience. I think of it more now in terms of the being and becoming. And the becoming is your choice.

So a lot of what you get prompted to do within modules is to do reflective activities, reflect upon your skills, development, your strengths, about your motivations, and how you imagine your future and how you're going to get there. So if I steal the thunder of how to be successful, I think it's that keep track of your understanding of your motivations, as well as what could be the normal dimension, which is your

normal in terms of good habits. Which days of the week are you studying, what time of day are you studying?

Because you might have to negotiate that with a workplace, family members, or whatever, or a dog that wants to walk every now and again. So yeah, I'm not a fan of normality. I moved away from diversity, though.

ISABELLA HENMAN: That's fine. Because beyond it, we're talking about diversity, we're talking about normal and not normal. We're talking about strength. So I'm just going to-- I haven't warned you again, but Jeremy, just because we're talking about neurodiversity, so Lorna shared a bit of ideas. Is there anything you want to share with our students about your experiences or any of the advice you've got for our neurodiverse students or learning about it?

JEREMY WILCOCK: Yeah, well, I think it's picking up on something that you've both said, which is that there are so many-- and I know some of the people participating from home said, which is that there are so many strengths which come with the different skills and the different experiences that we've all got. So I teach on a module-- if I can give a very personal example, Isabella-- I teach on a module, which is very analytical and it uses a lot of schematics.

There's not a lot of essay writing in it, but there's lots of tables, there's lots of charts that students are asked to present. They're asked to analyse text using visuals. And that really appeals to some students who maybe traditionally weren't enjoying or weren't as successful with some of the modules where they were expected to write 2,000 or 3,000 word essays. So there are always opportunities there. There are always chances for everyone as an individual to show the best that they can do as long as we can get you onto the right degree pathway, onto the right module, and as long as we can get that bespoke advice to you.

ISABELLA HENMAN: I think that's a really important thing. And it goes back to what you were saying about individuality earlier. We are all individuals. When I'm doing the online workshops I'm always saying to people, you are different. We can give you ideas, we can give you suggestions.

HJ gives his suggestions, even if he says he's a little bit of a mess at times. Lorna's saying about how she does things. Jeremy's saying-- I'll say what I do. We're all individuals.

Some of the things we say are going to resonate with you and you're going to go, yeah, that's something I'm going to mention. But just to bring back-- I think it was Lorna made the point about, or it maybe it was Jeremy. I can't remember because my memory goes, but this idea of if you've done something well, celebrate those achievements.

It doesn't matter whether it's normal to somebody else. It doesn't matter whether somebody else would think it's good. But if you've done something and your idea of the-- it was Lorna was saying, the way you're coming, this idea of your vision of what you want to do. Have your vision of what you want to do. I sometimes refer to past you and future you. So, what does future you look like? You might not know. There might be blur at the moment. What do you want to do? What do you want to achieve with future you?

It may be a very normal-- this perception of this normal future you-- or it may be you've got the visualisation Jeremy was talking about some modules allow to visualise things. And that might work a bit better for you. One of the things we do-- we have lots of different resources.

We do cater for different things. We cater for different learning styles. I come from the analytical type of thing that Jeremy was talking about as well. And I often-- I quite like lists, I like ticking things off, I like the

idea of that. And if somebody says to me, oh, do a nice big picture and do the holistic view, I'm like, OK, I find that a bit difficult. So Lorna, what about you? Do you find that kind of idea helpful or is there something else that you find more helpful?

LORNA SIBBETT: Do you mean the list making or the visions I mentioned?

ISABELLA HENMAN: Yeah.

LORNA SIBBETT: Both of them. In terms of vision, I think it's useful to have short and long-term visions, if that makes sense. You could pin up on your desktop an image of a graduation ceremony. You really look forward to that day when you're able to throw the mortar board in the air and graduate to families' cheers. But in the short-term, just to get through a particular module, you want to have some shorter term visions within that, which is again why you will be prompted to think about what particular skills you want to develop in the next nine months for the duration of the module. What do you want to get out of that particular module? Interested in module that Jeremy was talking about.

So that one is getting you to think in a rather different structured way. If it's a module that is that it said, we're going to develop your essay writing skills, your team working skills, you know what to expect from that module. So your module choice you should look at content of the module. For me, it's for the science. So what science do you want to learn? Are you interested in biology or physics? But also within it would be what skills you could hope to develop within that? Is there a focus on essay writing? Is the focus on development of schematic understanding? So that's what it suggests. Short and long-term goals, and as Jeremy said, have a good look at the skills dimensions of your modules as well as the academic end of them.

ISABELLA HENMAN: So those skills and the building your normal-- what is your normal student? Not normal according to somebody else, but if you want to be a student, what your pathway is. So it sort of links to the normal idea, but what you're trying to achieve for you as a student. So Jeremy, is there anything you want to add there?

JEREMY WILCOCK: Well, yeah, just generally, Isabella. I think there's this-- we keep coming back to this idea of normal, and we're talking about that as the meaning of the word. And we're also-- there's a suggestion isn't there that being normal as a standard, almost, to be aspiring to?

And when I was listening to the examples that our viewers were given there about what a normal student looks like, that sounded kind of aspirational. And I don't think as Lorna is really eloquently saying, I don't think we need to be looking to be average, do we? What we want to do is focus on what we can do well ourselves, focus on our own strength.

Don't worry about what other people are doing, but just think about where we've come from, where we want to go, and how the systems around us are going to help us to do that. So this sense that trying to always be in the middle is something aspirational or is it standard to be aiming for, I think that's something we need to get away from.

ISABELLA HENMAN: Yeah. But also, just for people that are worried and thinking we're only saying you've got to achieve the highest things. No, no. For some people, middle of the road is exactly what you want. You are taking your step-by-step approach and you're going, OK, this is what I want because we're going back to this idea, we're individuals, we're different, we have a different learning pathway.

Some of you will be on exactly the same learning pathway as somebody else. You'll be seeing the same student in each of your modules. But for most people, there is some variety and there's a few little differences. A few little-- we're talking about differences and this idea.

We'll come back to this idea of strengths. This is something we're going to explore a little bit more in a minute. But I wanted to come to HJ again now. HJ, is there anything else that you want to share with us from the chat, other than sabre tooth tigers and chocolate?

HJ: We're just talking a lot, which is amazing, about how study really builds our resilience and has created something positive for ourselves. David had a great point saying that studying has been like a really effective therapy in battling depression, giving something for us to focus on, a sense of achievement, which is absolutely amazing. And I think we're all feeling the same thing in the chat, because at some point we do get our knock backs and our hits. That TMA result that wasn't quite where we wanted it, but when we look at the bigger picture and see how far we come and thinking about our development it's really a strength and something that we're all benefiting from, whether we're normal students or not.

ISABELLA HENMAN: Great. Thanks. Yeah, and absolutely. So, do celebrate what you've done well. I did a session in one of the online workshops about using feedback. And the first thing I said is, didn't you do well?

You've managed to do something, you've managed to achieve something. OK, it might not be perfect. It might not be what you want to do, but you've managed to do something. Often, we have a tendency to focus on the negative. This is the idea or we don't meet that normal.

And it's interesting-- not being critical of anybody, but it's interesting how many people said, oh, I'm not normal because I don't do this. I don't do the study. I haven't got a neat desk.

And? So you haven't got a neat desk. The fact you're here today, you're watching, you're engaging, you're engaging with other people and you're doing all sorts of things. So what we're going to do, we're going to move on to this idea of strengths.

We've already hinted at it a little bit. And you're going to have another question, a focus in the chat board about, what do you think is your greatest strength, your greatest aptitude in terms of students here, not in terms of the amount of chocolate you're able to eat, although clearly, that's my greatest aptitude. So we're going to be talking about that.

So that's your question to give you a little bit of focus. So Jeremy, I'm going to be coming to you to start thinking about, how can students identify these aptitudes, how can they identify these strengths? What could you help our students with?

JEREMY WILCOCK: Yeah. Firstly, Isabella, that was a great point you made about the fact that anyone who is here today is already showing that they're willing to go a little bit above and beyond. I think that's a fantastic point. But yes, so how can students help to build their own effective strategies?

Well, there's two key messages I want to put across here. One, Lorna's already touched on it, actually. And that's the fact that I think that at whatever point of your study journey you're at, you need to know what your goals are. You need to know what you're trying to achieve so that you can then judge if you've been successful at it or not.

Now, they might be tiny steps. The goal might be to get to the end of the unit that you're studying or to understand the key term that you've been working on. Or they might be a little bit bigger. It might be working on a particular piece of assessment or completing the module that you're on.

Or you may be thinking even more long-term. You might be thinking about that final degree, or diploma, or certificate that you want to get to, or your career goals, or further study. So I think the first step along the way to being successful with your plans for your study is to know what you're trying to achieve. Only then will you be able to judge how good you've been.

The second key point I want to make, Isabella, as well, is that you're not expected to be high flying and fantastic straight from the get go. I do a lot of my work at level one with level one students and the tutors who are teaching them. And level one and access modules are designed to allow students to explore their approach to studying.

So if it gets to the first TMA, or the second TMA, or even get to the end of your first module or your access module, and you still feel like you're trying to get to grips with what's the best way for me to make my notes from my reading, how should I be referencing, what type of voice should I be using in my writing, then that's what access and level one study is all about. That's your opportunity, your playground, if you like, your academic playground, to discover your strengths and to try different things, to try different approaches to your studies.

Thinking about level one modules again, remember, by and large-- well, I don't think at all, actually. Level one modules don't count towards any final classification for your degree or your certificate. So it's a great place for you to try out different study skills and to work out what is working best for you.

If you can take some examples, I suppose, if you think about how we do our reading, how we do our studying, some of us can dip in and out of our module material. 10 minutes in the morning commute, or after we drop the kids off to school, or in the evening. We can just dip in and out of our study material. Other people, well, they need to be really strict and really regimented in saying, well, this day, I'm going to cover this part of the first unit. And then I know in three days time, I'm going to have another chance to do my work. And then I've blocked out this week to do my assignment. And they develop their skills that way. But I think my advice there, really, Isabella, is firstly, know what your goals are. What are you trying to get out of that particular piece of time you're giving to your studies? And secondly, use the opportunity at access or at level one to try out different approaches, whether it's doing the reading, whether it's note taking, whether it's engaging on the forum. Try different things. Only that way when you find out where your strengths are and where you might need to develop your skills.

ISABELLA HENMAN: They're so useful points, because I tutor a lot of access and level one as well. And I think I try to say to people, you don't have to be perfect immediately. Exactly as you said, Jeremy, we don't. And people think, oh, well, oh.

And then they see the feedback. When I'm marking things, I put things in pink text so it shows up-- my Barbie text as people refer to it. And sometimes they look and they think there's loads of text, oh, I must have done it wrong. No, it's this exploring and having a go.

I so wish I'd have had the opportunity to try different things. I was the, there you go, there's an essay title. You write it. No, not going to tell you how to write it. We're not going to give you any guidance.

You've got a library. Go to it. And that was a physical library and I didn't even know how to find the different things. Well, it's quite good. And again, with Student Hub Live, what we're trying to help me with is those skills.

Often, access and level one pay a lot of attention to, actually, not quite didactic, but giving you and showcasing different skills. As Jeremy was saying, the idea of trying things in different ways, suggestions for note taking.

And we'll always give you ideas of things that, in our experience, work and what students have told us have worked. But it is a chance to have a go. If it doesn't work, you know what? Fine.

Please don't beat yourself up because you've had a go at something and it hasn't worked. If you don't have a go, you're not going to know whether it works. So for instance, when we're doing things like time

management sessions or we're doing planning sessions, I'm always very open about saying, my maps, I'm rubbish at. I've tried a few and I've tried to try them, but they don't work for me.

But I wouldn't have known that if I hadn't tried. And I was open enough to go, OK, I'll give it a go and we'll try. So this idea, so this is the knowing where you want to come from. So these are some of the things that we're talking about. What are you trying to achieve, looking at what you want to do, and then exploring different things.

So we asked the question earlier about the, how do you know what's your greatest strength, your aptitude? HJ, what kind of fantastic strengths have we got coming up from our students?

HJ: Well, we've got absolutely loads which is really brilliant and it makes me really happy to see, because sometimes it's really hard to identify what our own strengths are. And sometimes having a little think, actually you think, oh, I'm great at this, or I didn't realise I was really good at that.

So there's loads coming through. So Diane says, 'stubbornness', Louise says, 'grammar', Boss says, 'I just want to do my best. I measure against me, not anyone or anything else', which I think is brilliant. And I think that's a strength, having that self-awareness and knowing what your own measures are.

Laura says, 'tenacity'. Martine says, 'creative thinking'. Emma says, 'I chose studying over a purchase of new shoes or a bag. It opens new opportunities'. That's a lot of self-discipline there, which is a great strength. Martine also says, 'I'm passionate about what I'm studying.'

Haley says, 'my open mind. I love to challenge my thoughts, and views, and often change my mind', which is what you want to get out of studying is to have that openness, and know that you're open to new ideas, and being influenced about new information that you find out. Lisa says, 'I'm one of the few people on my course who likes referencing.' Well, if you like it, that's a very big strength and maybe you can impart your passion for referencing on other people.

And Stacey Ann says, 'My greatest strength is my passion to improve myself within my study and to challenge myself.' And I'll finish on one of Natasha's saying, 'My greatest strength is not very romantic, I'm just stubborn. The more anyone or anything tries to intimidate me, the more stubborn I am,' which I think is a brilliant strength to have, especially as a student.

ISABELLA HENMAN: There's some great ones. So this idea of stubbornness, tenacity, keeping going, also the idea of exploring. So some of you may be thinking, oh I wouldn't even have thought of those strengths. But do.

The fact that Jeremy saying, you having a go, as Lorna was saying that you've got this idea. What do you want to achieve? How are you going to do it?

And then, their strengths. And again, we were talking about normal. Doesn't need to be a normal strength, doesn't need to be somebody else's strength. Actually, I'll get a question out. Lorna, what do you think is your greatest strength that might not be normal? I'll come to you in a minute, Jeremy.

LORNA SIBBETT: Oh, sugar. So I'm so stuck on the stubborn because I hugely respect stubborn. I'm sure there are people that are alive today just because they're stubborn and don't give in.

Actually, just let me choose that one. I can have a bit of stubbornness. If someone tells me I can't do something, I'll do it. I don't mean that in a really bad way.

I had my foot crushed in an accident when I was a child, when I was about 13. And a couple of doctors said to me, oh you're never going to be able to run. OK, that's not a good thing to tell a 13-year-old child. And about 15, 14, 15 I took up running, like, properly took up running and did really rather well at it. I think most people can't tell that there's something wrong with my left foot, it comes off the ground really quite

well. So yeah, I'll just choose that one because I love it so much anyway. And the idea of don't let someone else tell you what your limitations are.

ISABELLA HENMAN: My mum always used to say that to me, absolutely. Jeremy, I saw you thinking very intently there.

JEREMY WILCOCK: Yeah. I'm really pleased you came to me second, Isabella, because whilst Lorna was talking I could think long and hard about what my greatest strength is. And I'm very confident in saying that it is playing pool. Now, that's not relevant, is it?

So I very quickly thought of another one which is more relevant. And I think it's the fact that even though I'm here today and I'm jabbering on, I'm a very good listener, I think. And I'm very good at taking on board other people's points of view, listening to them, assimilating them, sticking them together with mine, and then arriving at a conclusion based on what I've heard from other people. So that's something that I find useful when I'm studying and also when I'm teaching. It also helps me, the pool player.

ISABELLA HENMAN: But yeah, that sounds fantastic. And I think, out of all honesty, because I've asked you and I just realised I probably ought to say mine. And I was actually thinking almost about what we're doing now. I used to be incredibly shy. Really, really shy.

I couldn't talk to people. I couldn't make phone calls. I just couldn't. I wasn't able to do that. The prospect of actually talking to somebody else, whether physically or even virtually, because in the day, before you did any kind of thing. So the fact that I can actually hear now and I'm confident talking, I can witter away and it's great. And I can do these things.

And actually, that was something-- because I was thinking, this will hold me back. If I can't talk, if I can't talk to people, I wouldn't have been able to do it. And to be honest, I was an adult before I could start talking to people. And then it's only I've developed it and since being involved in Student Hub Live, obviously I've developed my persona of being able to do things and I've learned from different people I've worked with, I've learned from students.

And this is this idea, you may not know your strength yet or you may not realise what your strength is. So sometimes it is a case of going, patting yourself on the back when you've done something and going, OK, I've achieved that. That is a strength.

Obviously we're talking about study, because as I mentioned before, I have a great strength of eating dark chocolate the same way as Jeremy has the strength of being a pool player and Lorna has the strength of running. But in terms of the study bit, actually, sorry, HJ, I haven't asked you. You thought you got away with it, didn't you? What's your greatest strength, then, relevant or not?

HJ: Well, you gave me a bit more time to ponder about it, which I'm grateful for. But I think my strength-- and it's something that's taken a very long time. And I think maybe some other people from we're chatting in the chat may understand it. My strength is just accepting myself.

I think it takes a long time to get to that point where I have accepted myself. I know I'm not a perfect student. I know I can be disorganised, all over the place, doing things at the last minute, but that's fine. I'm measuring myself against me. I accept that. I don't have to be the best. I don't have to be the top performing student as long as I'm learning something, and I'm developing, and I've accepted that that's where my strength is.

ISABELLA HENMAN: That's so fantastic, HJ. That's such a good one, because absolutely. Accepting-- and I think we mentioned earlier-- this measuring against, it goes back to the normality. Who are you measuring yourself against? Are you measuring yourself against this idea of the perfect student who does

everything, who sits there solidly at the desk and everything is done? Or are you measuring yourself against you? Again, don't beat yourself up.

If you've achieved something really well one time and you haven't another, well, as Jeremy, says you're trying. You're practicing different things. Just because you didn't get as good marks, well, hey, accept yourself. And this goes back to our idea of diversity. And I know a lot of our neurodiverse students do struggle with that idea because sometimes it's part of the condition. And even if you haven't got a diagnosed neurodiversity, some people can be really, really hard on ourselves.

And it's one of the themes-- that's why I'm expanding this a little bit now-- is this idea of you all have strengths. Everybody has strengths. You have your normal.

Your normal might not be anything like anybody else's. You can't see at the moment, but I've actually got my yellow DMs on here down here, which doesn't really match my professional bit. I love my yellow DMs. But again, it probably doesn't match with some of the different things.

What's your normal? What do you want to achieve? And if you want to think about it, write it on a Post-It. What are you trying to do from it? We're obviously, with the Open University, we're helping you study at university level. And we are talking about study skills but they apply to different places.

Lorna was talking about the stubbornness that she has that applies to different places. Jeremy was talking about this idea of looking at different things, listening to people, assimilating it, putting it all together, which helps with pool playing as well. Your learning will help you in different places.

So I've talked about that quite a bit. So I want to move on to an art that, it's still connected. But we're talking about building strength. So Lorna, I know that we've talked about some of them already, but you had some ideas to help students identify possibly some of their study strengths. What ideas can you share about that?

LORNA SIBBETT: I think you do get prompts in your module course to identify study strengths. So you've got opportunities for reflection. You've got your tutor feedback will help you to identify what you're currently doing well. What I would say is that you've always got choices to make, then.

If you've identified something as a strength, do you want to then pursue that more and build it up to an even higher level, or do you want to actually go, oh OK, I've developed that strength. I want to look towards some of my weaker areas and to develop those. So for example, you might be asked to take part in team activities as part of your coursework, but never the most comfortable thing for people to do even if you like working in teams, because with a sort of distance learning approach, it's not necessarily a synchronous team. So it can be quite hard to manage.

So you might find that, I think of Jeremy's example before about his module. You might find that you previously been really good at generating figures and graphics for reporting team outcomes. And you know you've got that strength, so you could offer a new team to do the same thing again because you're good at it and you're going to help out the team by doing that again. Or you could talk amongst your team members and go, well, maybe there's somebody else who wants to do that, and maybe I'll do what I'm uncomfortable with, which is the leadership if you've never led a team.

And although it fills you with dread, you think, maybe that's the one for me at this particular point in time. So identification of your strengths, you'll have chances within your modules and prompts. And that's why they're there. You'll have conversations with your tutor. And do seek those out.

So you'll get your TMA feedback. And hopefully within that, you're going to get positive comments about what you're doing well, and maybe little clues as to, OK, work on this. And please do. Don't hesitate to be in contact if you want to talk this through with me.

Now, as a tutor, I am so sincere in making that offer. So you wouldn't be a bother in dropping an email to me. We could arrange to have a little chat, or maybe it's more an email chat if you did a phone call or Adobe Connect is what you want to use for it. But we can arrange to pursue it and investigate a little bit more. So take those offers.

Also, to develop your strengths further, when you get your TMA feedback, it's always really nerve wracking getting your TMA feedback. So open it up when you're having a good day and have a little look. And note down, properly note down what you've done well, what you would need to work on for the future. I'll give you a hint about what I do as a tutor.

At the beginning of any module whenever I'm feeding back, I give copious feedback on the first TMAs. And my students are sort of warned to some extent that there might be as much text for me as there is text from them, or even more in the first ones, and that I'm really looking at upping their game. So I'm showing you the standards I would expect and how to do the best possible here.

And then, ultimately, I see my students acting on that. So instead of copious feedback, it's a little tick. I brought out the gold stars recently because some students are doing so well. And it's a lighter touch because you've actually developed as you've gone through.

So I don't use the word journey-- your development and your strengths development is very definitely a journey. And you'll see that within modules, Jeremy's talked about level nought and level one, which I teach on a lot myself. But even within the higher level modules, you'll see maybe that the initial TMAs have got little weighting, if weighting at all. And the later TMAs have got higher weighting.

And that's to give you safe space. Actually, that's the term that I was thinking of earlier when people were talking about it. You actually have safe space to reflect upon your strengths and test yourself, help yourself to push towards the challenges and to try new things out without having risk in terms of grade or having significant risks in terms of grade, and also to give you and your tutor something to talk about.

So certainly around your coursework, there's ample opportunity for strengths. And beyond that, you have opportunities within the OU community where you might want to think about applying your strengths. There's sometimes internships offered or scholarship opportunities. And scholarship, just to define what we mean here at OU by scholarship.

These are opportunities to maybe take part in a little bit of research or to help us evaluate what's going on within a module. So there are opportunities. And I think we've got, in this programme, some resources that we can provide you with those. Some of the opportunities are quite simple. You might be invited to complete a little questionnaire, a little reflective questionnaire which hopefully you'll find interesting and useful to yourself.

But it's actually really important to us in providing the best possible educational experience for you. So consider doing things like that, maybe involving yourself with the OU Student Association, being a buddy. You probably appreciated having buddies on your modules before. But consider doing things like that. Isabella shared that being naturally introverted is not something that you consider having to limit you. And if I say, I'm naturally very introverted myself. And I hope it's not coming across because you can pull on a different persona and you can get on and do a job for work or engage with people and have these positive interactions. Even if it's a bit outside your comfort zone, you're still going to get the endorphins--

the biological term-- you're going to get these feel good chemicals coursing through your body because you've risen to the challenges. So I've covered a few things.

ISABELLA HENMAN: You have, indeed. And in fact, there's a few things that I'm going to pick up from that. You mentioned buddies. Now, we were talking about buddies in terms of student buddy system. Modules have, students who've been on a previous year and buddy you. But we have as part of Student Hub Live, study buddies.

And in fact, Lorna you've got a wonderful study buddy in the background, which people have been mentioning about how adorable your study buddy is looking out the window. Yes, absolutely. Very well. Well behaved, gazing out the window, and lots of people who thought absolutely gorgeous.

So we actually, we have, often, study buddies in Student Hub Live. They're often animal-related. In our workshops we share pictures of those in our welcome beforehand. But also, you were mentioning about scholarship. And I know there are some resources from the event page. We've got a number of links because each of the different faculties within the university-- so that's the STEM faculty, WELS, FASS, FBL, and the other one that I can never remember-- LDS, I think it is, which those terminologies, it just basically is the school that you're sat within, so whether it's the science school, the business school, or so on.

They do have different opportunities. And there's a number of different things. So sometimes if you look at your student home news page, there can be things. So I know that I think it's SCiLAB which is the FBL one, they've got something coming up because I saw a notice about that recently. And, in fact, my faculty most of the time is STEM and we've got eSTEEeM, which is our-- I can never remember exactly what it stands for. I'll get shot for not saying that correctly.

But we do have student-led projects. So if you've actually been doing something, for instance, you found that you really enjoy engaging with Student Hub Live and you want to tell other people about it. Or you found that actually this idea of wanting to find other neurodiverse students and thinking about how you build your strength as a neurodiverse student, you may find that there are some research projects. Or you may, if you feel you've got the time or the wherewithal, you could potentially have a go at doing something like that.

That might sound really, really aspirational for some people. For other people they might be going you know what? I'd really like to do that. I'd like to have this idea of putting myself out of the comfort zone or maybe doing the thing within your comfort zone.

We sort of bridged both gaps there because both Lorna, and I, and Jeremy have been talking about this idea of sometimes we want to do things-- I hate to say it's easy. I'm not saying everything is easy, but sometimes we do take the path of least resistance, the one that doesn't present some challenges.

But sometimes actually, we want to strengthen us and think about the challenges a little bit more. I'm going to come to you. And think about that in a minute, Jeremy. I'll give you a bit of a chance to think. But we did ask the question on screen earlier about results, because Lorna was talking about TMA results and feedback. And we asked you, do you talk to anybody about your results? HJ, what did people say? Do they, or do they do something different?

HJ: Well, we do talk to people about results. But I think we all have different people that we go to and different forums that we think are better than others. So Lisa R. says, 'I'm in a WhatsApp group and two Facebook groups for my course. So I try to avoid them after TMAs so I avoid seeing everyone's results. There's nothing worse than being happy with your 70% and seeing people with your 95%.'

And I think that is a challenge with these groups, seeing other people getting these really high scores. I remember when I had my first TMA back, I think I got something like 56 and I was absolutely thrilled just to pass and get the feedback from the tutor. I saw other people with 90. I thought, what's going on? What's wrong with me? But I think that's all that acceptance and knowing your own progress.

Lisa R. says, 'You could be in the current week seeing questions and other people four weeks ahead. That could be a bit discouraging sometimes.' Heidi said that she agrees totally with Lisa and avoids things like Facebook because other people's stress around assignments or what scores they got is contagious. Heidi, her method is chatting to friends who are also studying, not in the OU, and juggling similar responsibilities which helps keep her grounded.

So there's people that we might find-- I had a study buddy that had similar experiences to me. We weren't studying the same things, but we had an understanding of each other about what in our lives impacts what we can do, how our mind sets about things, or organisations can impact our schools. Diane speaks to her sister. Carol worries about TMAs with her big brother and says, 'that is great', which is fantastic. And Natasha said earlier that, 'If you have to tackle so many things and see how other students can focus on their studies and feel safe and secure in what they're doing, it's not their fault but it can feel unfair.' And I think it's this whole thing of knowing where our strengths lie, understanding that most of the time when people post things on social media, they're posting their best. They're both posting their successes.

And it's the same as in the world we live in, we're always seeing this ideal picture, and social media, and adverts, and just accepting, actually, most of the time things aren't like that. You don't see what's going on behind, I think can help us a lot. So I think we do have people that we talk to, and share our successes with, and discuss our scores and feedback, including our tutors, family members. But we do try and avoid social media and try and take a step back from, maybe, what other people are saying in these forums. ISABELLA HENMAN: Yeah. I think that's such a key thing. And in the access modules that I'm involved with, and Lorna is as well, we had that as a question in the options week for some of our students was about social media. Is it a good thing or was it a bad thing? Some students do find it really, really encouraging, the WhatsApp groups, the Facebook groups, and so on.

But yeah, as HJ was saying, you're not going to post the fact that you've done really badly because you don't want people to know. You're going to post the fact that you've done really well. Goes back to our idea of normality. What is normal? Just because somebody said something, OK, they're probably very proud. Don't bring people down.

We're not saying to do that. But remember, you're measuring yourself against yourself. What are your strengths? What are you trying to build? So I've given you plenty of advance warning about this one, Jeremy. So we were going to talk about that in terms of some more of these ideas about building strengths. What kind of ideas have you been thinking of to say to people?

JEREMY WILCOCK: Yeah, well, HJ has actually covered it. The first point I was going to make is about, which was to think about the wider group of people who are there around you. Now I know lots of people are saying sometimes they'd rather not think about that wider group of people who's around them, certainly if they're on social media. But there's this trope, there's this legend around studying with the OU that it can be a little bit lonely.

But that isn't the case. That need not be the case, because there are always going to be lots of other people around you that you can turn to. So I mean, the obvious person, I suppose, is your tutor. And

obviously I'm going to say that, and Isabella and Lorna are going to say that. But we really do want the best for our students and we really do want to help them to succeed.

Lorna gave some really good practical examples there of what we do as tutors to help our students to achieve their potential and to succeed. We can't reiterate enough the fact that you need to look at TMA feedback, which will be on the script, it will be on a cover sheet. It isn't just the mark. Please don't stop at the mark.

But use your tutor. Use us for academic support. And never feel like you have to say sorry if you're getting in touch with us.

The amount of emails I receive from my students, which begin with, I'm really sorry, but-- and then there's a very sensible question or request which is coming. That might just be the culture or British sensibility that we think we always have to apologise for anything that we're asking for. That's why we're here. We love to hear from our students. And we really want to help you.

Just off the back of that as well, I have to say you hear this saying all the time, but it's never truer than at the OU. There's no such thing as a stupid question. So if there's something you are unsure about, whether it's about something you're learning about in the module or whether it's something more technical to do with your studies or to do with a piece of assessment that you're doing, there is no stupid question to ask. There's hardly any stupid questions to ask your tutor.

And there's all sorts of ways to get in touch with us. So no need to apologise getting in touch with us. And if you're thinking of a question, you can guarantee there's other students in your group who also have got the same question they want to ask you. So you've got your tutor who will help you there.

You've also got other people at the Open University. OUSA have been mentioned the Students Association. We've mentioned the other students on your module or on your pathway who might engage with each other in different ways, digitally or online. But I really want to make a plug as well here, one for the SST, or the student support teams.

So these are our colleagues based all around the UK in faculty areas. So depending on what degree course you're on or qualification you're on you'll be aligned to the Student Support team, an SST, and they can give more generic support about your studies, whether it's about course choice, whether it's about questions you've got about any additional requirements you might have, concerns about your student finances, even generic study skills. SST colleagues, they really want to hear from you as well. And there's all sorts of ways to get in touch with them.

But then there's other people in our lives as well, aren't there? And as I said, HJ has mentioned some of them. Even if, say, you're studying, I don't know, business systems, you might not be living with Alan Sugar, or Karen Brady, or someone who's an expert in business systems. But if you're enthusiastic about what you're learning about, then your friends, and your family, and your colleagues are going to be interested in hearing from you, and you might actually tap into some of their interests as well if you start telling them about your studies and telling them-- excuse me-- telling them about the skills that you're developing.

It's amazing when you mention the Open University, how many people say, oh yeah, I did a short course with the OU, or my mum used to study with the OU, or I've been thinking about doing it. So I think my first piece of advice there, Isabella, is to make use of the people that are around you in whichever way is productive for you.

ISABELLA HENMAN: Yeah, thank you. And I've been reminded that we've got-- we were talking about whether social media is sometimes not that helpful for people, but we have got an active presence on social media. Student Hub Live does, but the Open University Students Association and the Open University, there are official Facebook groups, there's official Twitter feeds, different modules have Twitter feeds.

And I know one of my modules, S112, has got a fantastic Twitter feed where the person there is sharing all sorts of interesting scientific information above and beyond the module. But it's this idea of linking with people, the community. Again, I've mentioned it, Student Hub Live is the community. We're this community across the whole university trying to bring people together regardless of module.

But you will have little communities within your module. You've got your tutor group forum as well. I don't think that was mentioned. But most modules-- not all-- have a tutor group forum.

And I was really pleased that in one of mine, one of my students started a thread that just said, hello, and said hi to everybody out there. And there was all these other people saying, oh hi, it's really nice. And they were sharing their experiences.

And it's actually really nice. It's scary. Often, really scary the idea of saying to something. And Jeremy was mentioning the Student Support team. And you think, oh no, I can only contact them if I need a lot of support. No, no, no.

They're there. Honestly, we want to talk to you. We get lonely too. But seriously we do. And as Lorna was saying when she was talking about the feedback, please ask us.

I always put at the bottom, if you've got any questions, please let me know. And it's so rare they do. So rare students do. And then when people do and then they come later and they say, oh, well, I didn't know that, and I was like, I so wish you'd have asked me because I'd have been so pleased to have talked to you.

I ran a one-to-one session with a student yesterday, and talking to her and she said, I would never have known that if you hadn't mentioned it. And I said, well, that's great because then we can talk through. Obviously as tutors we can't one-to-one sessions with all students all the time because we don't have enough time.

But if you do want an in-depth chat to try and build on some strengths or, for instance, try to address something that's currently a weakness and build it. And for instance, you may be looking at graphs and you may be going, I've got no idea. There's lines on a page, I don't know what they mean. Maybe have a chat with your tutor and say, could I have an additional support session where we talk about graphs, where we can actually go there?

It links back to the stupid question or the not stupid question. I remember my first ever tutor telling me that. So I was always the one that was asking the silly questions in the tutor group forum. And I was like, oh well, people are going to think I'm really silly. But, hey, I asked them.

So there's good things. There's links. Lorna, have you got any other people that you think would be good in terms of a support network to get students to talk to, maybe, to think about strength?

LORNA SIBBETT: I think we've covered it quite comprehensively. But I am fully supportive of-- it's like a little spider network creeping out there into the community. I mean, I talked about safe space for learning. And it can be nice to-- actually, I love the student comment about learning being healing for depression is something that we see again and again.

So there can be positives to your little adventure and your little discovery. But connect it with what you've done before, what you're doing now. Gossip it. Yeah, gossip about what you're doing. Use your storytelling to connect.

In S111 that I teach on, I encourage my students to use any small children that they've got-- grandkids, children-- as lab assistants for all their kitchen table experiments. These sorts of things, so that you're celebrating what you're doing, you're celebrating your own discovery. The act of sharing-- we do it with our food, don't we? We go out for a coffee with somebody or invite somebody around for a meal. The act of sharing something with someone is a celebratory act of itself. So yeah, build it in.

ISABELLA HENMAN: I think that's lovely, because this idea of sharing and talking with other people, when I first started as an OU student, which was before I worked for the university, and it was actually through sharing, through saying, yes, I'm happy. They said, can anybody share their experiences? Yeah, actually, I'm OK to do that.

And then they said, oh, have you ever considered working for the university? I was like, no, no, no, no, no, no. Of course I can't do that. Well, you know what it's like being a student. Why don't you apply? And things have gone on from there.

The idea of having people as lab assistants is lovely. But also the idea of talking to people, sharing your experiences. This engagement-- if you can talk about it to somebody else and sound enthusiastic, not only are you doing a lovely bit of promotion for the Open University-- good marketing-- but actually, genuinely, you're promoting yourself because you're saying, look. Look how much I've learned. Look how much I've developed.

Or even if it's a tiny thing-- doesn't matter. That tiny thing might be massive for you. Look what I've been able to do. Can I tell you about that? And if people go, I don't want to know, OK, fine, they don't want to know.

Their loss, to be completely honest. But there's so many things you can talk to people about. Now, I've come to both of the others. HJ, coming to you now. Is there anything that you think of as strength? Is there anything in the network or this spider network or anything that you want to add or reiterate?

HJ: I think just knowing from the chat and what we've been speaking about today that the biggest strength of the OU and the community that we're all part of is just how diverse we are, how we can come from different backgrounds, experiences, challenge, life events, ages, and that is a real strength that we can all draw upon, whether it's when we're chatting to each other on the chats, whether we're using the forums, Facebook groups, or whether in day-to-day life where we meet up with other students or come across them and work.

I think that knowing that we're such a diverse group is really a strength and we can learn a lot and draw a lot from each other. And I think that's what's happened today. By sharing your experiences, which I'm really grateful for and pleased to see, I think we've all benefited from what you've shared, which is absolutely amazing.

ISABELLA HENMAN: Yeah. It is. Because this idea of sharing and actually realising, it was something we didn't specifically talk about. Lorna and I were talking about it when we were preparing. And we were going to think about actually, Jeremy mentioned it slightly, was this idea of we're a distance university and it can be quite lonely.

But in actual fact, we mentioned it in terms of the network. But we don't want to make a big thing about it. Sometimes people think, oh, I'm a distance university. I can't talk to anybody.

But hopefully through what we've been talking about today, we've demonstrated there's lots of people to talk to. Whether that's talking through a computer, whether that's talking through social media, whether that's talking visually, audibly, however, there is a big network out there of people who can help you build your strengths. So we've been talking today about what is normal, what is good, how to build your strength.

So we've been saying, as a university, the Open University, we're not normal kids. We've been around for 53 years and we were built to be something different. There's lots and lots of people that studied with us. I can't remember the number. I think it's something like six million, but I might be quite low there. There's lots of different people around.

So in terms of normal, you want to build your normal. And then in terms of the strengths, we'll build on your little strengths, take your little wins, work out what do you want to come to? So I promised that I was going to get you to do-- well, I pre-warned you.

So Jeremy, HJ, and Lorna, I wanted you to give a one-sentence summary that your take-home message. So Jeremy, I'm going to come to you first. What's your one-sentence take-home message?

JEREMY WILCOCK: OK, well I'm going to use the current tagline that we're using in all of our adverts, Isabella. And I'm going to add a little phrasing to it. So our current tagline, which is a fantastic one, is dream, believe, succeed. I'm going to add into that dream, believe, work hard, and then succeed.

ISABELLA HENMAN: Fantastic. Yes, we do like to get that little bit. You do actually have to do some study along the way, but studying is great. Lorna, what about you? What's your one-sentence take-home message?

LORNA SIBBETT: Sod normality, by your own amazing self.

ISABELLA HENMAN: Absolutely, yeah. Yeah, we love that one. Yeah. Yeah, that one's great. OK, HJ, can you build on that one? Can you top those two?

HJ: [LAUGH] I think it'll be a challenge to top that, but my one-sentence. Take-home [INAUDIBLE].

ISABELLA HENMAN: You froze on me then, HJ. I didn't hear your sentence take-home.

HJ: I know.

ISABELLA HENMAN: Can you repeat it, please?

HJ: I promise I wasn't talking about white chocolate again.

ISABELLA HENMAN: Good. No, no, no.

HJ: No. But my one-sentence take-home is just be proud of what you achieved. And look back and you'll know you've done amazing, whether it's just a little bit of progress or massive progress. An achievement is an achievement, and be proud of it.

ISABELLA HENMAN: HJ did a nice long sentence there, But that's OK. We're not normal. We don't have to be normal. So are there any final comments from the chat desk that you wanted to add before we just sum up the whole event, HJ?

HJ: I think, again, I'd just like to thank everyone for their positivity, for sharing. Lots of people are saying their take-home from the chat is knowing I'm not normal, but it's absolutely fantastic to know that.

Because there's different norms and we all have our different strengths and weaknesses. And I think we're accepting that.

And Louise says, 'No one is normal and we should celebrate our little wins.' So thank you for everyone who's taken part in the chat. I've learned so much from you all and I'm sure we'll catch up with you again soon at our next session.

ISABELLA HENMAN: Fantastic. Thank you, HJ. So yes, to summarise, thank you to my guests, Lorna, and Jeremy, and to HJ, and also to the other-- Maryaa and Helen, to the chat. Remember, we're not a normal university. Nobody is normal.

And you can be as abnormal as you want, as neurodiverse as you like. We are studying. We're studying for a purpose. We're trying to build on our strengths.

You've got your own strengths. They may be the same as other people, they may be totally different.

There will be strengths in there. We don't want to make anybody feel bad about themselves and go, well,

I can't work out what my strengths are. But there are strengths there.

And it's a case of take your little wins, as we say. Take the big wins. Look at your marks. As HJ said, 54% on your first TMA, fantastic. It's great.

The fact you've done it in the first place is great. But build on that kind of thing. And remember that we are about building community at Student Hub Live.

You'll see on our main website, we've got a number of different events. In fact, we've got one about choosing degree courses and so on. We run regular workshops on the different skills-- essay planning, critical thinking, time management, feedback, all sorts of different things to try and get things. And it's a lot of community.

We talk about chocolate a lot. And yes, thank you, HJ, we don't talk about white chocolate. White chocolate is bad, dark chocolate is good. So thank you everybody for coming today. I hope you've had a good time. I hope you've got lots of things to think about. And hopefully we'll see you at another session again soon.

[MUSIC PLAYING]