

The poster features a light beige background with several decorative elements: green speech bubbles in the top left, a white silhouette of a head with a brain and an eye in the top left, a yellow lightbulb with a blue base in the top right, and a green fern-like plant in the bottom left. The text is centered and reads: "Professional Development Series for PhD and MPhil Students" in a bold, black, sans-serif font, followed by "Empower yourself to succeed" in a black, cursive script font. At the bottom left, there is a calendar icon and the text "7th - 11th March, 2022" and "Registration: via HKUEMS". At the bottom right, there is the HKU crest and the text "GRADUATE SCHOOL THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG".

**Professional Development Series  
for PhD and MPhil Students**

*Empower yourself to succeed*

7th - 11th March, 2022  
Registration: via HKUEMS

GRADUATE SCHOOL  
THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG

### Workshop 1: Stress to Strength

**Key points:** Management of Study/ Work induced Stress and Anxiety and its effect on Productivity

Stress is not just a psychological condition; it can affect your physical health and well-being if considered negatively for a longer period. It can affect your body and your mind (thought patterns, learning, memory, and feelings), and as a result, your behaviour. Your productivity, creativity, innovation, emotional intelligence when dealing with others and flexibility of thinking all decreases. Research itself may be an arduous journey for you. Experiments are highly sensitive and difficult to perform, and all the labour turns useless if you can't get the result as expected. It may therefore be quite stressful, frustrating, and depressing for many RPg students. But miracles can happen if these stresses can be used as a source of motivation in a more positive way and as a fuel to do things it can turn into learning and strength.

#### **Learning Outcomes**

- Understand the impact of stress on body and mind
- Learn how changing and managing the perception towards stress can change the outcome in terms of productivity

#### **Learning Activities**

1. Story Sharing
2. Discussing case study
3. Activity/Techniques to understand stress and strength
4. Tips and techniques to change perception

**Date:** March 7 (Mon), 2022

**Time:** 2:30pm -5:20pm

**Venue:** Zoom link will be emailed to those successfully registered

**Online registration:** [https://hkuems1.hku.hk/hkuems/ec\\_hdetail.aspx?UEID=80521](https://hkuems1.hku.hk/hkuems/ec_hdetail.aspx?UEID=80521)

## Workshop 2: Attention please

**Key points:** Building Focus, Minimizing Distraction, Enhancing Attention, and Sleep Management

The average human attention span is now shorter than a goldfish. A recent study found that the average human attention span has fallen from 12 seconds in 2000 to **eight seconds** today. It is reported that goldfish have a 9-second attention span. In this age of easy access to the internet and social media, our attention span has been reduced to a minimum. Along with the short attention span, we also notice a shorter memory. With information overload, our brain is not able to retain every detail it processes and impacts our productivity, attention, peace of mind and sleep. We feel more distracted and bored. As the mind wanders, research has shown that it easily gets trapped into patterns and negative thinking. It is extremely important for RPs to have their attention intact either for performing experiments or handling the equipment or for academic writing. Any distraction can cause major health, safety and career hazards.

### **Learning Outcomes**

- Learn the techniques to deal with distraction and minimize random mind wandering
- Know how to focus on your goal and retain attention for longer periods of time

### **Learning Activities**

1. Decluttering techniques
2. Focus building activity
3. Conscious relaxation technique

**Date:** March 8 (Tue), 2022

**Time:** 2:30pm -5:20pm

**Venue:** Zoom link will be emailed to those successfully registered

**Online registration:** [https://hkuems1.hku.hk/hkuems/ec\\_hdetail.aspx?UEID=80523](https://hkuems1.hku.hk/hkuems/ec_hdetail.aspx?UEID=80523)

## Workshop 3: You can do it

**Key points:** Building Mental resilience and strength amid crisis and Emotional regulation

Currently we are impacted by travel restrictions, plummeting stock prices, supply shortages etc. RPs students may have anxiety about getting the virus themselves, worry that our loved ones will get it, worries about financial implications and all the other dark scenarios flooding the news and social media. RPs are not even able to join overseas conferences/seminars physically which used to be one of the most exciting and fruitful experiences of the journey. Non-local RPs students may not be able to go back to their home and feel lonely and isolated. In all these scenarios the tendency to look at negativity of life may get exacerbated, and the mind becomes even more hooked by obsessive thinking, as well as feelings of fear and helplessness. Sometimes, miscommunication or misunderstanding between supervisors and students also causes a lot of stress. We cannot change the situation but can do something about how we are responding to it, our emotional and psychological response to crises. Being able to analyse your own emotions and build resilience to cope with the stress during a crisis can give you an upper hand to deal with the situation.

### **Learning Outcomes**

- Understand the emotions and how to regulate those
- Learn the skills to develop mental resilience for responding in a better way for any crisis

## **Learning Activities**

1. Breathing exercises
2. Mindfulness
3. Destress exercise
4. Aromatherapy exposure
5. Working with thought process

**Date:** March 9 (Wed), 2022

**Time:** 2:30pm -5:20pm

**Venue:** Zoom link will be emailed to those successfully registered

**Online registration:** [https://hkuems1.hku.hk/hkuems/ec\\_hdetail.aspx?UEID=80526](https://hkuems1.hku.hk/hkuems/ec_hdetail.aspx?UEID=80526)

## **Workshop 4: Dealing with rejections and failures through cultivating a growth mindset - “POWER TO EMPOWER”**

**Key points:** Fixed Mindset AND Growth Mindset, Steps to building Growth Mindset, Effective use of growth mindset in learning (life, education, and work)

In the research journey, getting publications and applying grants have become measurements of success; however both are becoming extremely difficult for many RPs day by day because of high competition and other reasons. Hence, RPs have to go through the rejection and failure cycles many times before they can get published or get a successful grant. This whole strenuous period may push them to negative feelings. This also generates a lot of peer pressure among lab mates, teammates or other colleagues negatively affecting the mental health of students. Every one of us wishes for success and works hard for the same but sometimes things don't happen the way we want. Let it be getting rejected by your dream company or failing to qualify for an exam or reaching your goal. Life gives you the taste of failure when you least expect it, and in some phases of life negativity from continuous failures and rejection overrides us, starts consuming us and we feel shattered and broken. While failure highlights our most vulnerable and weakest points, it also drives us to alter our weakness into our strength and to create a stronger version of ourselves. This workshop focuses on how to develop a growth mindset to empower yourself in any difficult circumstances.

## **Learning Outcomes**

- Understand and learn to overcome crisis situations of failure, rejection and negative thinking.
- Apply the techniques to move from a fixed mindset to a growth mindset and develop skills for a healthy and strong mind.

## **Learning Activities**

1. Positive thinking
2. Strategic activities to deal with rejection and failures
3. Adaptability techniques

**Date:** March 10 (Thur), 2022

**Time:** 2:30pm -5:20pm

**Venue:** Zoom link will be emailed to those successfully registered

**Online registration:** [https://hkuems1.hku.hk/hkuems/ec\\_hdetail.aspx?UEID=80527](https://hkuems1.hku.hk/hkuems/ec_hdetail.aspx?UEID=80527)

## Workshop 5: Find a leader in you

**Key points:** Identify your leadership style, Authenticity, Skills, Qualities, Roles, Responsibilities, Building your team, Staying grounded,, Passion, Purpose, principles and effective use of these qualities for better life and career

**Leadership is one of the great journeys into our own soul.** Leadership has many voices; you need to be who you are and never try to emulate somebody else. All of us have a spark of leadership in us. However, the challenge is to understand our own self well enough so that we can use our leadership gifts to serve others.

- You do not have to be born with the characteristics or traits of a leader
- You do not have to wait for a tap on the shoulder
- You do not have to be at the top of an organization
- You can step up and lead at any point in your life

Life is all about giving and living it to the fullest. **We don't have to wait for leadership roles but instead look for every opportunity to lead and develop ourselves.** People trust you when you are genuine and authentic. Leadership represents your inner self, who you are as a human being at the deepest level.

**So don't hold back, lead now. If not you then who?**

### **Learning Outcomes**

- Understanding an interesting journey of Leadership, its dimensions, learning's, skills and implementation in our day-to-day life.
- Analyse the qualities of leaders who are known and remembered for their cherished values, morals, passions, motivations and serving society.
- Able to follow your internal compass, and how leadership will be authentic and how people would love to be associated with you.

### **Learning Activities**

1. Sharing Stories
2. Learning Activities focussing on crisis situations
3. Small exercises focussing on main elements of leadership
4. Tips for managing your leadership skills

**Date:** March 11 (Fri), 2022

**Time:** 2:30pm -5:20pm

**Venue:** Zoom link will be emailed to those successfully registered

**Online registration:** [https://hkuems1.hku.hk/hkuems/ec\\_hdetail.aspx?UEID=80528](https://hkuems1.hku.hk/hkuems/ec_hdetail.aspx?UEID=80528)

### **About the Speaker:**

**Dr Nimisha Vandan**, co-founder OKAYMINDS and a former Post-Doctoral Fellow at the School of Public Health, Li Ka Shing Faculty of Medicine, The University of Hong Kong conducted research to understand the impact of COVID-19 of various population in Hong Kong. During PhD, her research focus was on understanding the effect of culture and ethnicity on patients' access to healthcare, their experience with healthcare system, cultural competency of healthcare professionals. Being passionate about understanding the influence of culture on life, she is keen in raising mental health awareness in the community and runs an initiative called OKAYMINDS

(<http://www.facebook.com/okayminds>). She has successfully received a certificate in

“Intercultural communication” from HKU and has been conducting similar workshops for another local University and a number of NGOs.

She did her Masters in International Health from The University of Tokyo, Japan and Bachelors in Pharmacy from India.

**Dr Amit Wanchoo**, CEO SPACE COMMUNICATIONS, is a medical doctor from the Kashmir region of India which has been a conflict zone for decades and has himself been affected by multiple crisis situations. Having witnessed variety of socio-political challenges during his shaping years, he is very committed to help people to solve their issue through communication channels in the community. Also, he has utilized medicine, art and culture as an effective tool for generating mental well-being. He was part of the pioneering work by Medicine sans Frontiers in India for mental health training in Conflict zones.