

- **Don't compare yourself to others**

We are all on our own personal journey of self discovery. There is no point me comparing myself to someone that may want to become a neurosurgeon, so don't put yourself through that angst. Its really easy to get caught in that trap of comparing your marks to those of your friends or peers. Try really hard to avoid this. All it does is get you frustrated with your own marks and makes you doubt your own abilities – which is not helpful – AT ALL. I am more than sure that your parents will just want you to try your very best no matter what your ability and get the best out of yourself. Focus on what you can do rather than what your mates can do.

- **Find your own best way to study**

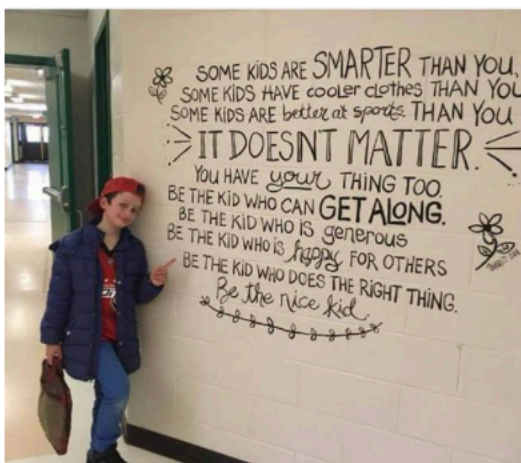
I can remember vividly my Year 12 year especially my study habits or lack thereof! I had to have music going, the television going and during SWOTVAC in the lead up to exams – many packs of smarties were consumed! We all study differently, so again its important to find the best way to study – FOR YOU! I have no doubt that there will be a variety of people telling you how to study, when to study and what to study. My advice for what its worth is:

- Put your phone away: either put it in a kitchen draw, on top of the fridge, but don't have it near you when you are studying – it is a distraction (just think about how many times you look at it during the day without studying!)
- Set up a study space: this can either be in your bedroom (at a desk) or where someone can see you studying, make sure it's a comfortable space including; warmth, plenty of pens, pencils, highlighters, whiteboard, blu tak (for sticking up planners/information). Make it your own.
- Study time should be similar to class time. If your classes run for 45 minutes, study for that amount of time and then take a 5-10 minute break (where you can go and check Facebook, Snapchat and Instagram just to make sure you haven't missed anything) and then study for a further 45 mins. Structure your study time like a class.
- DO NOT study after 10.30pm nothing is ever retained – so don't even try! If you need to get up earlier and study before school.
- Stay behind after school for an hour to get some of your study done, that way you have access to teachers if you need help and that can clear up your night for other things like; football training, work, socialising or just simply relaxing.

VCE Year 12 is all about independent learning and finding out how you learn best. This means discovering how you study. You might learn best by drawing pictures and diagrams, making up rhymes or study/flash cards, or you may learn by simply writing things down. If you know yourself and how you study, learn and remember, you will have a better chance of knowing your coursework.

- **Actually TRY in the GAT (no really – try!)**

This Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> June, students studying a Unit 3/4 subject will be sitting a 3 hour General Assessment Test (GAT). Its one of the strangest tests that you will complete, with two writing tasks and 70 multiple choice questions that quite often have you scratching your head. Here is an example!



I have no doubt that you are thinking – there is so much more I could be doing with my 3 hours than sitting this stupid test! The GAT is by no means a waste of time. It could very well save a year's worth of hard work if you happen to fall sick or if unfortunately a family member passes away during the exam period. It happens every year unfortunately, and the GAT can save you! The GAT is essential in formulating a Derived Exam Score that you will get for your exam if you are unable to attend. Note: that it must be exceptional circumstances to miss an exam – sleeping in is not one of those! Your derived score is a prediction of your outcome, based on your GAT and SAC scores. So its worth it to do you best. Because its worth it!

- **SACs are intended to prepare you for exams**

School Assessed Coursework otherwise known as SACs is the closest you are going to get to an exam situation throughout the year, especially around time constraints. So use your SACs to practice completing the task in an allocated time. This may take some time to master. Practice is absolutely essential and will give you an advantage in the exam. It will also help you to feel at ease and less pressured when having to write a lot in a short amount of time. This is a good thing to keep practising throughout the year during your study time.

- **Don't stress too much**

Some parents are probably laughing thinking I wish he/she would stress a little bit just once throughout the year rather than use the 'she'll be right' approach! But remember that VCE Year 12 isn't the be all and end all. Your VCE is a journey and that ATAR at the end of the year lasts for one day and shouldn't define you. If you are working towards a target ATAR to get into a course that's great, but ALWAYS remember that if you don't get that 'magical number' there are other options. There are different pathways to become a physiotherapist, or a school teacher or in fact any chosen career path, sometimes you just have to look outside the box.

Your ATAR should NOT define you as a person, and certainly it shouldn't stop you from reaching for your ultimate goal. It just may take you an extra year or two years, but don't let a number stop you. If you want to do something more than anything than nothing should stop you.