

Lets talk

A podcast

Announcer: Welcome to “Lets talk”. In this episode we'll meet the counsellors behind the podcasts.

Lavlet: Hi everyone. My name is Lavlet and I'm one of the counsellors at George Brown College. I just want to welcome you to our first podcast, “Let's Talk. We're really excited to be here and I am joined with Constantine, Pablo, Heidi and Aarti. During this podcast we're going to spend a couple of moments just talking about what we really love about being counsellors and counselling at George Brown College. Later, we'll talk about self care. So first we'll start with what we love about being counsellor at George Brown College, so I will start with Constantine. Welcome Constantine!

Constantine: Thank you Lavlet. I feel on the spot. (laughter) What do I love about counselling? I love the aspect of hearing people's stories and I think being at George Brown we get to meet a diverse group of people from... basically around the world and we get to hear their different stories. I feel fortunate to help them in their journey of what we whether it's one year or two years in the program and yeah, that's what I love about being a counsellor and George Brown. Thank you.

Lavlet: Great thanks Constantine. It's so true, we have such a diverse population of students at George Brown College which is great. We meet students from all over the world which is awesome. And how about you Heidi, what would you say would be something that you love about counselling at George Brown College or what you love about counselling?

Heidi: Okay, thank you so much Lavlet. Hi, I'm Heidi Mehta. I use She and Her pronouns, and I am a counsellor here at George Brown. I've been here for the last five years and I am just really passionate about supporting students in their journeys. I feel like our students come from all different kinds of experiences and are dealing with all kinds of things and pressures and also joys in their life and I really enjoy being part of their journey and the watching them succeed.

Lavlet: Thank you Heidi. That sounds great it. It is true, it's great how we get to help them along their journey of life as a student at Georg Brown College. And how about yourself Aarti? What would stand out for you about counselling at George Brown College?

Aarti: Hi everyone I'm Aarti. Thank you Lavlet. I think there's a few different things but some of the things that really stand out for me is what Heidi and Constantine shared, but also just noticing the resilience in our students. Like they're going through this phase of their life where they're in a change in school, maybe their identity's changing as well, as they're exploring and getting to know themselves. I just love to see that and really seeing how much strength that they have even when they're going through a hard time.

Lavlet: Thanks Aarti. That's so true or students are very resilient and they have lots of strengths. So true. And how about you Pablo, what would you say you love about counselling and working at George Brown College as a counsellor?

Pablo: Hey everybody. I really love working at George Brown in the counselling department. I get to meet such a diverse, you know, our student body is so diverse, we have people of all different

backgrounds and ages and it's great to hear their experiences and notice some commonalities and differences in their experiences at George Brown and yeah, it satisfies my curiosity, it satisfies my intention to be compassionate in the world and I get the support people through some of their challenges and it's a really rich and rewarding job. I love it.

Lavlet: Awesome. I so agree. It's really great how we get to support students and just be there for them. I think for me what stands out, what I love about counselling so much of what you guys already shared but it's really wonderful how we work with the diverse population and that we just get to be that person for them to support them when they're going through those challenges and we also are really fortunate many times that we get to see them come through, which is really exciting to see that as well too. Next question. I have for everyone is as counselors we are definitely supporting students that we just talked about but what are ways that we take care of ourselves? So what does self-care look like for each of you? So how about we'll start with Aarti if that's okay. What does self care look like for you? What sort of things do you like to do to take care of yourself or to make sure that you're doing certain things that you enjoy that important to you?

Aarti: Mm-hmm yeah, so I think for me, I really value being an introvert. So my alone time or trying to nature, um dance is another thing I love to do... cooking, so just like doing those types of activities has really been helpful for me with my self-care.

Lavlet: Oh lovely, and how about for yourself Pablo, what are ways that you take care of yourself, or different interests or hobbies or interests that you do for self-care?

Pablo: Especially lately I've been reaching out to friends and that's been really great and supportive, just online chatting with people. I pet my cat a lot, I really like spending time with her and playing with her, but one of the things that I'm really trying to use intentionally is curiosity and compassion towards myself and so even when I'm in a bad mood or I'm not feeling great or if I feel irritable, I try to be compassionate with myself and curious about why and figure out ways to support myself that are, that are healthy.

Lavlet: That's so great, a really good tip to students, to just be compassionate to themselves. And what about you Heidi? What would be different things that you do to take care of yourself?

Heidi: Thank you for asking Lavlet. So yes, this is Heidi and there's some things I really love doing. I'm so passionate about doing yoga and mindfulness. They're part of my regular routine and I also just love being in nature, so going for long walks, going to the beaches, camping, you know, anything that really connects me with the outdoors.

Lavlet: That sounds great. Thanks, Heidi.

Heidi: Thank you.

Lavlet: And how about for your Constantine? What does self-care look like for you?

Constantine: I'm going to pick up on Pablo, Aarti and Heidi's statements. It's similarly to them. It is about self-compassion, being with nature. I'm trying to do mindfulness exercises and, just a little secret, the gardening thing, I know Aarti likes gardening. I think she has some plants on her balcony as do I.

Aarti: Yes (laughter)

Constantine: So sorry Aarti. (laughing) But that's one thing... because if you don't have greenery, I think it's just makes it very sad. So, I've been cultivating some greenery, indoors and out, and so that's how I practice self-care and the cat too. There's a lot of cat owners here.

Lavlet: Nice. I love it. There's quite a few, yeah, cat lovers. (laughter)

Constantine: How about you Lavlet?

Lavlet: For me similar, like being in nature is like just like soothes my soul. It's so important. So each day I always go out for one, maybe two walks and like, I just need to be outside for that. I've been biking a lot this summer, which I really enjoy as well too. And just spending time, like spending time with people who are special to me really is a form of self-care for myself too.

Constantine: Yeah, agreed.

Lavlet: So I know a lot of us, all of us are really excited about doing this podcast and we all have different topics we're passionate about talking about, some that came up, we mentioned earlier; self-compassion and relationships, different way that we think of ourselves, so, I think this is, the first I'm aware of, I could be wrong, please feel free to correct me, that a counselling team is doing, maybe in the GTA area and we're really passionate about it. So, why don't you share the different things out for this podcast? Do you want to start? Is that okay if you start Aarti?

Aarti: Yeah, sure. I'm really excited about the podcast. Not because I've recently become an avid podcast listener, (laughter) but also because I think that you know, sometimes there's students who are not able to come in for sessions or maybe they're not really sure that they really need counseling on like an ongoing basis, but they're really into self-help or they're into self-growth and so I'm really excited to share about that with the students and a topic that I'm passionate about is perfectionism. I'm also a recovering perfectionist. (laughter) So, I will be yeah, I will be doing a podcast on that and I'm excited to share and see if this is helpful for students.

Lavlet: Great, thanks Aarti. And how about you Pablo, what would you say are your excitement or passion for this podcast?

Pablo: I'm really excited about finding new ways to be more integrated into the GBC community, especially during... like being so online. So I think that this is a really good way to do that and I'm hopeful that this will... podcast will contribute to people feeling more normal about their human experiences, of some suffering and some pain is a normal part of the... just living, and hopefully we can reduce some of the stigma around talking about these things.

Lavlet: Yeah, so important just for people to have an opportunity to normalized their experiences and a place to get help and support as well.

Pablo: Yeah.

Lavlet: And how about yourself Heidi? Do you want to share a bit more about different passions that you have about topics to talk about and just how you're feeling about launching this podcast?

Heidi: Sure. Thank you Lavlet. I'm Heidi and I'm so excited about the podcasts that we're doing. I think that it's a good way of reaching people and I know myself, I enjoy just putting on podcasts when I'm you know, doing stuff around the house or when I'm on TTC or whatnot, so it's such a great way of

connecting and feeling connected and I'm passionate about you know, many of the different topics we're talking about, whether it's healthy relationships or you know, taking care of ourselves using yoga or exercise. You know, those are all wonderful and I look forward to connecting with students via this way.

Lavlet: Wonderful. Thank you Heidi, and how about for yourself Constantine?

Constantine: I've been listening to you guys and you know, it's wonderful how we came together for this podcast team and I'm a novice at it. I haven't digested podcasts until actually this opportunity came up to work with you guys and I took a voice acting class and that's what kind of intrigued me about this platform and because we're going online much like what Pablo, Aarti and Heidi had talked about, we wanted to... I wanted to I guess show a side of us that's not in person and how challenging that might be trying to convey some of our topic matter that we're hoping to have our listeners learn about and share about. For me, I'm excited about talking about sexuality and sexual health because that's the background that I initially came from, so along with other topics that we typically cover intimately with our students but in a more broader scheme or broader platform if that makes sense Lavlet. How about you?

Lavlet: Thanks Constantine. Yeah, for myself, I'm super excited about this podcast. In just that it's a, I'm just echoing so much what others have shared are so important but that it's being most accessible to students because I know students are very busy and have multiple responsibilities, could be family, you know, they're taking care of their kids and they're trying to study at the same time and working at the same time so I think it's so great that we have this as an opportunity that they can learn about different ways to take care of themselves and get that support any time or any place which I really think is great and just so, yeah, a way that we can connect with students that work for them, so I'm very excited about this being available students. That was great guys. it's so great, just how we had the opportunity to launch this podcast. I know we're all so excited about it. Just to wrap up for today, we each, you know shared what we like and love about counselling, we got a chance to talk about different ways as counselors that we take care of ourselves and our passion, our excitement for this podcast. So I thought to wrap up, how about we just each share one tip that we give to students, because we've been at the college for several years, we know the different flows of the academic year, so what would be one tip that we would help students as they journey through their academics, so maybe we'll start with you Constantine, what would you, what is something that you share with students?

Constantine: Thank you Lavlet. That's so hard there's so many tips, but if I can offer one tip for students, especially in the online world and I think, for me, it would be taking a very deep breath, yeah, that would be the one tip. That's it. (Laughter)

Lavlet: Okay, nice. Yes, breathe, right (laughter) breathe. Life gets busy, school gets busy so remember just to breathe.

Constantine: And that's the funny thing because sometimes I hold my breath. Anyway, there we go. (Laughter)

Lavlet: Thank you Constantine. How about for you Pablo? What would you, what advice would you give to students as they start their academic year?

Pablo: I think about two things I'm trying to think back to my time as a student and it's to talk about my challenges with people that care about me as they're coming up, you know, friends and family and my fellow students so that was helpful to me in college and, If I need support like not to let it go to like absolutely and desperate for it. It's available to me now and so if I'm feeling a little bit stressed out to reach out now instead of it letting it get worse.

Lavlet: Yeah that's great. I know in the counselling office we see students, who... certain things might be building up for them, but it's, yeah at any point in time the things are just, you know, as you mention, when things are just getting a little bit difficult, just to reach out for that support. Yeah, that's a good point. And how about for you Heidi? What tip, advice, suggestion would you give to students.

Heidi: Sure. so um, I mean as human beings we are wired to connect with each other and that is such an important part of our well-being and school is a place for you know, building those support networks and even making lifelong friends and connecting and networking with people in our programs or elsewhere and I know that the schoolwork is a lot, but part of the college experience is connecting with each other and it's a really, really important piece for mental health as well. So I encourage everyone to you know, check out all of services, check out peerconnect, you know, the student clubs. I know things are different with covid but it's really important to connect with each other and also be open to connecting with people who may have different experiences from us it can be a very enriching time of our lives.

Lavlet: Wonderful. Thank you so much for those words Heidi. That's great. And how about for yourself Aarti? What would you say, a tip or advice that you give to students?

Aarti: I think just like mentioned already, I think back to when I was a student so there's a theme here (laughter) but I think that the one thing that really stuck with me was when I understood that, like there's, Heads and tails on two sides of a coin. Procrastination and perfectionism are two sides of a coin, so I think my tip would be, not to be all or nothing about things right? Like know that you can succeed in school and you don't have to be doing every assignment perfectly and every essay perfectly, every lab perfectly and to kind of have just like, build that compassion with yourself to know you're here your main focus here is to come learn and do the best you can. And, you know, taking someone of that pressure off yourself.

Lavlet: Nice. That's great Aarti, that's really great. I think for myself, a tip that I give to students and I feel like I give this to quite a bit when I go into classrooms and do a brief introduction about counselling services, so really it's going back to what we talked about earlier, but really take time out for yourself for self-care. I think back when I was a student in grad school. I didn't do that and looking back I wish to do that, so even just like this 15 minutes at the beginning of the day, take out that time for yourself before you start the day, it could be journaling, it could be spending time reading a little bit, it could be sending off a text to someone who is really important to you, but just to really carve out you know, 15, 10 minutes each day for yourself. I think it's so important to do as a student, because I know it's busy, there's lots of assignments and stuff to do, but it's so important.

Constantine: It's so important but so hard. I forgot to mention that sleep is important. (laughter)

Lavlet: Yes. Yes! Remember to sleep!

Constantine: But, yes, I agree.

Aarti: yes, it's important not to neglect your basic needs.

Lavlet: Yeah.

Pablo: And eat a meal.

Constantine: And eat a meal. Yeah.

Pablo: A healthy meal.

Lavlet: Thanks everyone for joining us for our first podcast. We are super excited. I'm very excited and it's great to have you join us today and to listen to this first podcast.

Aarti: This is Aarti. Yes, thank you Lavlet. I really enjoyed listening to everyone and I look forward to working with everyone and listening to the podcasts that I won't be recording.

Constantine: This is Constantine. And I'd like to thank Lavlet for moderating today and I want to thank Heidi, Aarti, Pablo for making it a very lovely experience. I love working with you guys and look forward to producing more content for the GBC community.

Heidi: This is Heidi and I just want to second what Constantine said. I'm so grateful to be working with Constant. Pablo Aarti and Lavlet and I really look forward to you bringing these podcasts to the George Brown community as well as welcoming feedback and suggestion topics from students to see how we can meet your needs.

Pablo: This is a Pablo. I'm really excited about working with you guys and continuing to produce content for the GBC community and I'm really excited about being able to reach people that I probably will never meet, you know. It's exciting.

Constantine: And Lavlet, final thoughts for you?

Lavlet: Oh, I'm so excited. Yeah, it's great working with all of you and I'm so happy that we're on this team and on this project together and I'm just excited that we get to connect with students in a different way, and I'm really looking forward to this podcast. Thank you everyone. Our team and all those who are listening.

Aarti: Thank you.

Constantine: Bye everybody.

Pablo: Thanks everybody.

Heidi: Thanks

Pablo: Bye.

Announcer: So this concludes today's episode. Thank you for joining us. If you have any questions, feedback on our episodes, suggestions for future topics, or wish to book an appointment with our counselors. Please send us an email at let'stalk@georgebrown.ca. Come by again, and "Let's Talk".