



Academic Assembly – Morning Comment

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Over the past three or four years, we have spent a lot of time here at school. StAC is where we have all chosen to learn at, and we are all encouraged to strive for success in all areas, including academics. What we will be sharing with you today is some insight to how Daniel, Gemma, and I have navigated through the past years. Beginning with learning how to get started, then following with how to build positive work habits, and ending with the importance of finding a passion, we hope this will help you achieve at your highest level this year.

Take the first step. People view studying as a herculean task, a boar to be wrestled to the ground, something to be avoided. I personally was a part of this group. I was never the greatest student, not even today. I shamefully say that I was constantly off-task, whether it be Minesweeper or Minecraft. Studying seemed difficult. However, what I have found over time is not studying is hard, but starting to study is hard. What I didn't understand is that I didn't need to have a steel-like will and push through all of my problems. What I needed is to take the first step, to pick up the pen and stare at the paper, put down the phone and open the Word doc. Just that. Clear that desk, throw my phone on the bed, and take the first step. That is it. The hard part is over, nothing extraordinary, but it is important. This is the start of the year, the time when moods are the highest and you each have the most motivation, so make the most of it and take the first step. However, over time you may start to slip; you may find that it is getting harder and harder to get started, but that is where habits come in.

I am sure everyone in the chapel this morning has experienced the late night before an internal has been due. Trying to finish the work up to your standard at 8.00am before school starts is basically a rite of passage for NCEA students. I, for one, am well practiced at the last-minute dash to get things finished. However, building positive study habits will make your life a whole heap easier. So how can you do this? **Little and often.** Firstly, it is important to make studying a routine. I know most of you will be thinking, 'oh, I don't have time, or I have better things to do', but even just 20 minutes a day for three weeks is the same as a solid seven hours. By doing little and often, making studying just one of those things you do every day, you will find yourself routinely studying even on the days you have absolutely no motivation. It is also important to make sure any studying you do is actually



worth it. So, removing any distractions you might have (yes, that does include your phone), making use of active recall methods which will make your studying more effective, and making sure you have breaks between your study sessions to allow your brain to recharge. **Little and often.**

Academic success is not only about the results. I believe success can come from enjoying what you are learning and actually having fun at school. I do not mean to say that having bad results is successful, but rather when you enjoy learning and are willing to put effort in because it is fun, the high results will follow. When I was first entering middle school, I had not yet found anything that I particularly liked to learn about. After a few weeks, I found myself getting excited when I was walking into Spiro for my Year 9 science class. The topic that I found really interesting was the reactions in chemistry. Learning how it all works and seeing it happen in the real world made me realise I had found a passion for science. Trying hard in these subjects and doing well seemed to be much easier than others, as it was no longer a chore showing up to class and I was actually having fun.

Now that you are all seniors and you will be in subjects that you chose, to enjoy school and learning, you need to find parts of the subjects that are fun. When your teachers are going over a topic and something sounds particularly interesting, focus on it, and be encouraged to learn more about it. Whether it is academic, cultural, or sporting, every person here will have a passion – the hard part is finding it.

I remember walking into Academic Assembly last year, feeling disappointed because I didn't achieve the results I wanted, I didn't meet expectations, and I could have done better. There may be people here today that feel the same way. However, today is the best day to start again, taking the first step, building positive habits, and finding enjoyment in our learning are all important aspects of studying. Whether you are proud or dejected by your results last year, we challenge you to push yourself this year and give what we said a go. Remember, 'Blue and White, Do it Right'.

Many people view studying as a task that takes a lot of willpower and motivation. It is difficult, but the hardest part by far is the start. What many don't understand is once you get through the beginning and start to study regularly, everything comes much easier, and studying each day becomes part of your routine. Motivation may come off the back of your results from last year. If you thought you did badly, this is your chance to improve, and if you thought you did well, this is your chance to continue. You could take one step because a teacher is pressuring you to finish an internal. Take this as an opportunity to begin in all of your classes. Put down distractions and start learning. That is it. The hard part is over, nothing extraordinary, but it is important. This is the start of the year, the time when moods are the highest, and you each have the most motivation so make the most of it and get started.