In the hallowed halls of academia, where the pursuit of knowledge meets the trials of time management, college students find themselves juggling textbooks and exams with the grace of a circus performer. Though many enjoy the college experience it is by no means an easy feat to get through it. Most students find that the most important asset at your disposal is not a book or a study guide. It is the ability to cope with the stress of university life and everything that comes along with it. To obtain a better understanding of the relationship between coping and the mental health of college students I reached out to Dr. Sheila Kennison of Oklahoma State University regarding her article “Humor and resilience: relationships with happiness in young adults” to ask her a few questions about her findings.

The Resilient Scholar: Collegiate Coping

When asked what unhealthy coping strategies she saw most often in young adults, Dr Kennison responded that her research found that “self-defeating or self-deprecating humor is particularly related to adverse outcomes.” (Kennison) She advised that seeking out support by way of talking to friends, or fellow students, was likely to be a much more effective strategy than negative humor and that “Social support is the number one predicator of resilience.” (Kennison) Unfortunately college students are not known for always taking advice, even when it is genuine and meant to be helpful. When asked if she believed young adult students could be encouraged to adopt healthier coping mechanisms, Kennison stated that she does believe they can, but that most times they need to hear the same advice from multiple sources before being willing to take it seriously. She went on to recommend that in order to better help students struggling with mental health, college mental health providers should follow up with a student when they observe behaviors related to these struggles and ensure that they receive the support and help that they need.

In essence, the journey through college is not merely the accumulation of knowledge via books and lectures, but rather the ability to maintain composure and resilience in the face of stress and adversity. But they can’t do it alone. With the help of outside support such as other students, friends, family, and their teachers, students can surely complete their studies while maintaining mental equilibrium.

Works Cited

Kennison, Shelia M. “Humor and Resilience: Relationships With Happiness in Young Adults.” *Humor*, vol. 35, no. 4, Sept. 2022, pp. 665–81. https://doi.org/10.1515/humor-2021-0079.