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| Speak Up - KōrerotiaInternational students, wellbeing and talking on air16 January 2019 |
| Female | Coming up next conversations on human rights with “Speak Up” – “Kōrerotia”, here on Plains FM. |
| Sally | E ngā mana, E ngā reo, E ngā hau e whāTēnā koutou katoaNau mai ki tēnei hōtaka: “Speak Up” – “Kōrerotia”. Tune in as our guests “Speak Up”, sharing their unique and powerful experiences and opinions and may you also be inspired to “Speak Up” when the moment is right.Welcome to “Speak Up” – “Kōrerotia”. I’m your host Sally Carlton and today we’re talking about “International students, wellbeing and talking on air.” This idea has come about because of a couple of things joining together: The International Student Wellbeing Strategy, which was released in mid-2017, and a project that Plains FM has been working on here which is called STeudaemonia meaning ‘student wellbeing.’ Just to introduce you a little bit to the International Student Wellbeing Strategy: It was developed specifically to protect and enhance New Zealand’s reputation as a country that wants to look after its international students and be a “welcoming study destination” is the words that they use. The idea is that international students should know their way around particularly four key areas: Economic wellbeing - that’s the ability to support themselves financially; education - so the idea that they are going to have high quality education; health and wellbeing - the idea that students will know that they will be safe and well in New Zealand; and inclusion - the idea that students will feel welcomed and valued when they are here. In terms of international students, New Zealand has a huge international student population - 125,000 international students annually - and this makes education New Zealand’s fourth largest export which I thought was pretty amazing, after dairy, travel and meat. In 2017/18: Again, pretty unbelievable - this means that there was an economic contribution of 5.1 billion [dollars] into the New Zealand economy. In Canterbury that equates to 11,800 international students this past year, $470 million. Here, our main students’ countries of origin are China, India, Japan, Korea and the USA. So, I thought we might start off by thinking about what is this project STeudaemonia that Plains FM is running and Laura, you might be a good person to talk about it. As we go through we will introduce ourselves. We’ve got four guests in the studio today. If you could tell us then, Laura please, what is STeudaemonia?  |
| Laura | OK. Well, STeudaemonia started out as an idea that was bounced around with myself as the contact coordinator at Plains FM and Thi Phan who is the Diversity Manager at Hagley College. We were discussing how we could bring international students, their voice, into the media landscape and she knew about the International Student Wellbeing Strategy with the Ministry of Education and so I just did a little bit of hunting around their website and discovered that they had a bit of funding to support some projects that enabled these wellbeing indicators. And so we just thought we would love to have international students at Plains FM, it really fits with our kaupapa, our mission. We want to support people of different languages. We have programmes here already in 18 different languages and we have a lot of skills and a lot of people that work with people of different ethnicities and we just thought it was a really natural fit and we love to welcome international students into Plains FM. So we just set about devising a project which involved doing a little bit of research to find out well, what are the areas and what are the groups that maybe need a little bit of help with social inclusion and maybe would benefit the most out of having a voice. Then we also decided we would do regular weekly radio shows and podcasts by, for and about the students. We provide the training to the students and then they devise their programmes, keeping in mind these wellbeing indicators that you mentioned earlier. And they could discuss amongst themselves, they could go out into the community and then obviously the listeners, the other students out there, could gain some knowledge.  |
| Sally | I’ve got some stats here about STeudaemonia: Plains FM has trained 70 broadcasters, there’s about 60 currently broadcasting, and these students come from all over the world which is pretty exciting: Japan, China, India, Nepal, Brazil, Columbia, Pakistan, Philippines, just to name a few. And one of the cool things as well is that the age ranges from 16 right through to the late 30s and the students are here studying all sorts of different degrees: Undergrad, Postgrad, tertiary qualifications, English as a second language, all sorts of things. That said, it would be lovely to hear from our international student guests on the show. Sohana perhaps we’ll start with you, if you could tell us a bit about yourself please? |
| Sohana | Well my name is Sohana and I am originally from Nepal and it’s been almost, like, more than two years I have been here in New Zealand. I was here to study a Diploma in Information Technology Level 5 and 6. The good news is I have just completed my study and I have been working these days so I am on my work visa. Coming here to New Zealand has been a journey of finding myself, although as the time passes by I get to know more about myself. I never thought I would be in this and I think the journey of finding myself has been going so well and that’s all for now.  |
| Sally | I’m sure we will hear more about it as we progress.  |
| Jack | I’m Jack and I am from China and I have been here for two years so I came here in 2016 and I started Business Management and Marketing at Ara and it has been a really good journey as well and I have met so many people from different countries and respect for their culture and listened to different perspective on different people so it has been a pretty good journey and I quite enjoy it.  |
| Sally | And Minaho, you are also an international student but not broadcasting on STeudaemonia but you have been helping Plains FM.  |
| Minaho | Yes I’m Minaho, I am from Japan and I was studying at the University of Canterbury but I came here just as exchange student so I already finished my whole study here just last month. I am still doing some interning with STeudaemonia now and am really enjoying it.  |
| Sally | Great. Well, one of the things I think would be nice to find out from you guys: What are some of the best things about being an international student from your perspective? You have mentioned a couple of them.  |
| Sohana | For me, connecting with peoples, new peoples and getting to know their culture and tradition. I am so into learning new things especially new cultures, traditions, new languages. As he mentioned the different perspective, because different people have different opinions and that’s the good thing about being an international student, that you get to meet so many people each and every day and so for my communication skill, day-by-day I believe that I have been improving the way I used to speak and the way I am seeing myself.  |
| Jack | Yeah just be open-minded and meet people from everywhere, from Europe, from Asia, from Africa, and just get to know friends from different countries and also improve English and stay [*inaudible*], stay open-minded and also you can try something different, something you never try before. And I mean, after I came to New Zealand I tried rock climbing and I tried tramping and mountain running and all sorts of different other sports. So I mean there is some things I really am into and something I am passionate about so I mean it’s really good to come to New Zealand.  |
| Sally | Would you have tried them in China, do you think? |
| Jack | Not as much as New Zealand. As back in China, I mean, too much study so not too many opportunities to try those sports.  |
| Sally | What are some of the really big challenges that you face as international students?  |
| Jack | I mean the culture difference. And the food. I mean, after I came here, like, the first three months I lived in a homestay and every day was some meat and potatoes and vegetables. I wasn’t really used to it. In a different culture like the Asian culture and Kiwi culture and European culture and how we interact with other people is quite different. Yeah.  |
| Sohana | For me, I would say weather was kind of challenging because I belong to a country where we have a certain months like a fixed month so three or four months summer and three or four months spring and three or four months winter so I was used to that kind of weather and when I came here I can find pretty much all weather in one day which is not good sometimes because I leave home without umbrella or no proper jacket and I think it feels like summer but when I come back home I’m all wet. So that is kind of challenging. Of course the job hunting, I would say, because I have been through that situation so I consider it is one of the challenging phase of my life because I was jobless for, like, three months but later I got it but for me that was hard at the beginning.  |
| Sally | Minaho, how about you?  |
| Minaho | For me the challenging thing is studying with native English language speakers because obviously English is not my first language, my parents, my friends all speak only Japanese, no-one can speak English that well so it was very hard to study with other international students in here.  |
| Jack | Yes and the Kiwi accent is quite hard to understand.  |
| Laura | I agree with that, I agree with you! |
| Sally | Laura is a migrant.  |
| Laura | I’m a migrant. When I first came here to New Zealand, even though I’m a native English speaker, it took me two months before I could really understand what Kiwis were saying. I was always saying “Excuse me?” “Pardon me?” “Can you repeat that?” because there were so many expressions and just the style. My ear wasn’t trained for it. So I can only imagine what it must be like for you folks who don’t have English as your first language, it’s a challenge yeah.  |
| Sally | When you came to New Zealand, was this the first time you were living away from your families?  |
| Sohana | For me yes, it was the first time I was staying away from my family, first time for me.  |
| Jack | Yes I think so. Before in China I only go away from family for seven days and now I’ve been two years, I reckon this is first time, yes.  |
| Minaho | It is also my first time living away from my family for this long time. I have been other countries for only one month but this is longest time.  |
| Sally | Yes I think that must have a big impact on both the advantages but also the challenges that you are facing.  |
| Sohana | True. Staying away from family some time, you think a lot because you have to do everything by your own. You start your day by your own and you end up doing everything by your own. Sometime you feel like I wish I had my family with me but everything gets better by the passes of time I think so it is going well.  |
| Jack | More freedom.  |
| Sohana | Yes and I am thinking to go back to my country after a few months, let’s see. Finally after two years.  |
| Sally | OK. Well, we might have our first song. Sohana, have you thought of a song you would like? |
| Sohana | Of course, I would like to play one song by Shawn Mendes, ‘In My Blood.’ It is kind of letter to my experience so let us play this song for now.  |
|  | **MUSIC BY SHAWN MENDES – IN MY BLOOD** |
| Sally  | You’re listening to “Speak Up” – “Kōrerotia”. Today we’re talking with Laura Gartner, Sohana Poudel, Minaho Nakamura and Jack Liu about “International students, wellbeing and talking on air.” This segment, we’re just going to think about what is wellbeing and I specifically would like it to be that broad because I think everybody brings so many different perspectives to that question. Minaho, perhaps we’ll start with you: Throw some ideas out.  |
| Minaho | For me, being active is really the key point to my international student life better because for me it is really hard to get out from my comfort zone especially the first semester but last semester, second semester, I started taking internship and also the other course is more like… Can get opportunity to meet new people, other international students, which is a really challenging thing for me first but it is a really nice experience for me now.  |
| Jack | I think there are two parts of wellbeing: Physical wellbeing and mental wellbeing. So physical wellbeing means healthy and sleep early and all this other stuff and just keep you energetic. As in mental wellbeing is also important especially for the young generation we need to find something we are really passionate about, not just studying every day, not just studying and go back home and watch videos and play games and sleep. We need to find something, like, in our daily life, maybe what is your passion, what kind of things do you want to do? And find hobbies and find new interests and just go for it. So that’s something, once you have a goal, once you have something you want to do… I mean, this is mental wellbeing and so keep you mentally well.  |
| Sally | What are your passions that you find give you something interesting?  |
| Jack | Just a lot of things I am passionate about, and I personally play a lot of sport. I enjoy trying different things and especially get a chance to do the radio show and last year I had a chance to public speaking in front of 200 people. After I came to New Zealand I got so many chances to try different things and a lot of social networking and meet a lot of people from different countries. Another thing I learn in New Zealand is sustainability as well and I went to an environmental camp and learn how important it is to protect the environment especially for the young generation it is our responsibility, it is our duty to keep the environment well because, like, the other day I saw one video and in the next decade, in the next 30 years, some small islands will be submerged and some countries will disappear in the future. I think it is really important to know these kinds of things especially like we have really good opportunities to study here and live here but some people from some countries they are suffering; they are suffering from disease and poverty, hunger and different problems. So I think it is just learn a lot of things in New Zealand, it is pretty good. Meet different people and get the understanding of different things so I think this is something I learnt.  |
| Sohana | So for me I think that wellbeing is a positive outcome, I agree with our friend that it is the tracking of psychological, social, emotional and spiritual condition of a person so it is all about making friends, connecting, keep learning and here we are talking about the wellbeing of international students, sharing our experiences what we went through, all the opportunities, challenges, that I believe wellbeing is.  |
| Laura | I think also feeling safe and secure, making connections in your community, I think that is really important as well.  |
| Sally | It is really interesting: Without having specifically brought it up, you have touched on what the Mental Health Foundation of New Zealand calls the ‘Five Ways to Wellbeing’ which are Connect, Give, Take Notice, Keep Learning and Be Active. So exactly what you are talking about Sohana, the different parts of wellbeing I suppose. In terms of what you do to look after your own wellbeing: Jack, you’ve talked about playing sport and being active and Minaho you mentioned I guess going outside your comfort zone actively, putting yourself outside. What other things do you do?  |
| Sohana | For me, I believe in giving, like doing voluntary work. Whenever I get time I involve myself in voluntary work to realise that there are so many people who are in need of your help. Instead of just sitting at home playing games, playing with your phone, you can use that time for someone else who really needs it. It makes me smile and that is I think a great of my happiness is helping others, it makes me really, really happy.  |
| Sally | I remember the first time I met you and you said that you volunteer at the City Mission and I thought that’s really cool.  |
| Sohana | Yes I learn so many things actually from there. Now I am on a break, I told them that… Because there are so many other things that I have to take care of as an international student as well so I am on a break for three months. So many people tell me, like, why are you doing that thing because you will not get paid for that but that’s not what I work for. I work for inner peace, I believe in inner peace and I used to go there every week and I realised that there are so many things that we complain about and there is the same number of people who are asking the same thing that you complain. So many people in need. So you can use the things that you have which you don’t want any more in your life to help someone else and I learn so many things from City Mission and I am so willing to know something more about that so I will be definitely back to that mission soon.  |
| Laura | I wish the listeners could see the big smile on your face when you talk about what you do.  |
| Sohana | I just love that, I don’t know, I am thinking to do something more for the society and for the country as far as I can do for every people from every possible way but let’s see, one person is enough to help people, you don’t need a group, you just need a… Be the starter, start from you.  |
| Sally | It is an interesting point that you have raised, I think, because part of the International Student Wellbeing Strategy that we have been talking about is international students feeling valued and welcomed - and part of that value comes from, I think, students giving back to New Zealand, not just taking, I suppose, but also giving what they can back and New Zealand is recognising that.  |
| Jack | I totally agree on what she has said, I think that is really impressive.  |
| Sally | Jack, for you the environment I think is probably one of your drivers?  |
| Jack | Definitely. I mean, New Zealand is such a beautiful country so that is what I learnt. I mean, I go out and go and see the nature and realised how important it is to protect our nature because in the future if we didn’t look after the environment we would never have chance to go out and do those kinds of things.  |
| Sohana | Talking about New Zealand, I am so happy and so proud to be a part of this journey. I never thought that I would be like this if I hadn’t made that decision to come to New Zealand because it has taught me a lot of things. To be myself. I used to be very… I had that kind of social phobia you can say, don’t like to interact with people, don’t like to socialise much because I used to think, “What they will think about me?” That was the problem inside my head. But as soon as I came here I learnt so many things. The people here are so amazing and it just made me like them, just smiling every time, don’t care what the problem is and still have faith in yourself and be happy with what you have. So I am so thankful to New Zealand for this journey.  |
| Sally | It is fantastic that it’s helped you develop your own sense of self and that is inherent to wellbeing as well. Minaho, do you think you’ve had that experience too?  |
| Minaho | Yes like Sohana said, I was also being part of volunteering experience in Canterbury so I got some experience to give something to that community. We went to Twizel and also Hokitika of New Zealand and we also communicated with local people there, also we strengthened our inside group communities, more strength and it was a really good opportunity.  |
| Sally | Laura, as somebody who watches people come into the studio to record, do you… What’s your take on wellbeing?  |
| Laura | I think people being free to express themselves in a safe environment. If mental wellbeing is really important to them, being able to discuss the issues, discuss the problems; discuss solutions with others, experts or with their own peers. Just seeing people being able to discuss whatever is important to them.  |
| Sally | We might end it there and the next segment we are going to look at STeudaemonia specifically and how that relates to student wellbeing. Jack we’ve got your song now, what have you chosen for us?  |
| Jack | So the song I want to play is ‘Paradise’ from Coldplay |
|  | **MUSIC BY COLDPLAY – PARADISE** |
| Sally  | E whakarongo ana koe ki te hōtaka “Speak Up” – “Kōrerotia”, you’re listening to “Speak Up” – “Kōrerotia”. In this segment we’re going to be thinking about broadcasting as a means of abling international student wellbeing. We’ve talked about what that wellbeing might look like and specifically in this segment, how broadcasting can lend itself to wellbeing. To start off with Sohana and Jack, I’d love to hear from you what is your programme as part of STeudaemonia and how long have you been involved in this?  |
| Sohana | I think I have started around June/July so it hasn’t been a long time but it is still has taught me a lot. Self-confidence was core and also it has given me a voice to share my feelings and my opinions, my perspective towards life and everything. And usually we have a group called Radio Rangers and we have a circle of friends, I usually do so with my Nepalese friend and we are hosting so many… We have already recorded so many programmes related to wellbeing, international student wellbeing, and we have shared our experiences, the challenging times that we had to go through so that the new people will know what it feels like and we are trying to do our best to give solution to them.  |
| Sally | And how have you been finding it?  |
| Sohana | Amazing. I am so thankful that I made that decision to be a part of STeudaemonia. I already mentioned that it gave me a voice; I would never be able to share my experiences, my opinions if I don’t have this opportunity here in Plains FM. There are still so many things in my mind that I am planning to talk in Plains FM and I am so glad that it is giving me that opportunity. I hope it will go well.  |
| Sally | I’m sure it will.  |
| Jack | So I think I started my show in July as well and so my show is our radio show and it is pretty good, I mean when different people talk about different things and give some recommendations and some experience to different international students, it’s pretty good.  |
| Sally | Do you guys feel that you have changed over time as a result of doing this?  |
| Sohana | Of course it does help us to become the person who we are today because I had no confidence at all when it comes to talking in the media because it was the first time ever in my life I am doing this and day-by-day I feel like I am getting that self-confidence to speak up, to raise my voice in a crowd and that’s what I needed. I always wanted to have that courage inside of me to speak what I had in my mind and Plains FM has helped me with this journey.  |
| Jack | Definitely, it is pretty cool. The first time I did the radio show and everything was new, everything was so interesting and time by time and month by month, I learn a lot and improve my English and get different guest speakers and we talk about so many things and we increase our friendship as well, my friends and it has been a really cool journey and I would love to do it next year and next year after 10 years, 20 years.  |
| Laura | Excellent I like to hear that, that’s good.  |
| Jack | So it’s really good.  |
| Sally | Laura and Minaho, you have been observing the broadcasters coming in, what changes have you seen over time?  |
| Laura | Oh absolutely, confidence is number one. When you folks and others, other students, have come in for the first training session it’s like a group of scared school children almost because it’s such a foreign environment to you and yeah, the media can be a scary thing. In some countries young people like you wouldn’t have the opportunity to get into it and so it’s breaking down the scariness around the process and all of the technical equipment etc. It’s just a way of expressing yourself and allowing that welcoming environment here so that you can express yourself and it doesn’t take long, your first programme you sit around and come up with some good ideas and start talking to each other, just a natural conversation and so instantly after the first programme confidence rises. You come back again for the next one and technically you have improved as well, taking the opportunities to learn more, it’s great.  |
| Minaho | I haven’t met so many broadcasters, as many as Laura met, but I think their English, confidence with speaking English is really improved. Epecially I met Japanese students studying here, they put themselves in English-only speaking environment here which is really stressful for them for the first time but after they start broadcasting here they have more confidence to speak English, even if other situations not only in the radio broadcasting.  |
| Laura | Just another point I’ve noticed is the cross-cultural conversations that happen as well which is really fantastic to see when we get a group of international students in the room, not only do they talk about their one topic for that group but then once the mic goes off lots of conversation happens, connections get made and then the next programme comes back with a different group of students, a real mixture and so it really broadens the conversation.  |
| Sally | Minaho, you’ve been involved in some evaluation of STeudaemonia, what have the evaluations shown us about how broadcasting can enable international student wellbeing?  |
| Minaho | It’s pretty much same that we talked about before, like wellbeing for connect, being active and stuff like that. A lot of students told me that it is a really good opportunity to meet new people in here, not only just the students but also staff working in Plains FM. Also they got a lot of opportunity to share in their opinion and information which is it makes them feel like really belonging here, like we are not only taking but also we can actually speak up our opinions. Also, through research for their topics, they can learn a lot of knowledges about New Zealand. Also their own culture and stuff. I think the things that I heard from them.  |
| Sally | When you two were deciding to get involved, did you think about the benefits or was it more, “Hey this sounds like a cool opportunity, I’ll just take it up”?  |
| Jack | Yes at the beginning I thought it was pretty cool but after time and time I saw it was really meaningful, to introduce different things to the public, to the international students and give them a chance to get out of their comfort zone and try different things so I think that is something really important.  |
| Sohana | Yeah it’s same for me as well but by the side I was also thinking… There was one side of mine that I really wanted to improve in myself which was speaking up and raising my voice, sharing my opinions with the people and getting feedback from them of course so I can improve in the future and when I heard Plains FM is having this opportunity I thought this could be the best platform for me to speak up and for my self-confidence of course.  |
| Sally | Well it’s great that you can both - well, everyone taking part - can sit here and feel like that, I think that’s really amazing. I think we might have our final song then, Minaho. And this Minaho’s choice of song. |
|  | **MUSIC BY LARZRANDA – RANGERS** |
| Sally | This is Speak Up – Korerotia and we’re talking about international student wellbeing and broadcasting on air. In this final segment we’d like to think about how broadcasting can enable international student wellbeing for listeners, not just for broadcasters. And we’ve talked a lot about the benefits to the broadcasters and particularly this idea of increasing confidence and having a voice. In terms of having a voice, how important is it that international students’ issues, challenges, the good bits as well, are put out there into the world?  |
| Jack | Yes they just need to try it to be honest, they listen to our show, we can’t tell them everything and the thing is they need to get out of their comfort zone and listen to our experience and just give it a go, just try it and see how wonderful it is.  |
| Sohana | Nobody will not know what you went through unless you share with them and I think Plains FM is doing such a great job by giving us that opportunity to share our problems and hopefully we get solutions soon.  |
| Sally | In terms of it addressing this International Student Wellbeing Strategy - we talked about it at the beginning, economic wellbeing, health and wellbeing, inclusion and education - Laura, you might be a good person to talk to about this: Do you feel that the students telling their stories, sharing their experiences, is having impact for others? |
| Laura | Oh definitely because international students, often when they come here - and I’m not one of them, you folks are - but what I have heard from you and others is that it can be a bit lonely at the beginning and you’re going through experiences and you’re not sure who to go and see and who to talk to and being able to hear the experiences of other students that have gone through really similar experiences is really affirming and it helps break that loneliness bubble and it also… I mean, you provide really valuable information for people, you just help them along the journey, so I think definitely. Even practical information, we’ve had shows on tenancy matters, we’ve had shows on how to stay warm in winter so a lot of practical advice as well.  |
| Sally | And that’s important, I think, just as much as the mental wellbeing side of things. Minaho you haven’t produced a show but you’ve listened to some, what’s your experience?  |
| Minaho | Like Laura said before, I can hear a lot of student experience like I felt the same thing because I came here by myself and pretty much I don’t know anything, I don’t know anyone here and then I felt really lonely for the first couple of days. Then I know this radio and then I heard a lot of international students’ voices and then it really helps me, it really worked for me.  |
| Sally | Laura, you mentioned some of the topics that are covered, I’d like to hear, Sohana and Jack, some of the topics that you’ve chosen to talk about and why you specifically chose them? What was the relation to you for wellbeing?  |
| Sohana | Well we have recorded a couple of shows and some topic where the first one was what changes has New Zealand made in my life and then fear of imperfection and then we talked something more about our festival and something about healthy food and now we are planning to record a show on the topic of rejection and social phobia which I consider to be one of the massive problems of so called millennials like us. And I have been through that situation, as I already mentioned, I was a victim of social phobia before and I thought this could be the best idea to tell something more to people about what I went through and then what consequences it brought along with that journey but now everything has been changed and it happened for good. We shared our experience. And we also talked about women in parliament, as a woman I believe that it is very important to talk about the rights and all the… We talk about feminism as well because in my country there is a wrong perspective of feminism. They consider that we are trying to have more rights than men which is exactly what we are not trying to say. So we made that thing clear now in an episode and we talked more about the imperfection that you have but I consider that imperfection as perfect because if you are imperfect then only you can see the other possible ways to find a new way to be perfect, that’s what we talked so far.  |
| Sally | You certainly have covered a lot of angles of wellbeing, that sort of healthy eating, physical wellbeing, mental wellbeing, fear of imperfection, those sorts of things. And Jack, you’ve done some really interesting shows as well: Flatting with New Zealanders - which is not something that all international students do by any means, a lot of them might stay in a homestay or in a halls of residence, for example - and your most recent show on the outdoors and I think your first show was on water quality so again, that environment coming through. What was it that made you focus on those other than, I guess, they’re your passions?  |
| Jack | Some interesting topics to talk to, I mean for the first one talk about the water issues and especially in Christchurch Lake Ellesmere is polluted and so wanting to take actions now and to raise awareness and to get started and do things, to protect the water. For the second show also flatting with Kiwis is just to tell people how we adapt to each other and it was actually pretty interesting because we all have different lifestyle and different hobbies. I mean, they like parties, parties all the time and on weekends and so for me as a process to adapt to this kind of culture and for them as well, like they try to adapt to my culture as well. Sometimes I just want to be quiet, sometimes I want to do my things so they understand what I’m doing now and they understand those kinds of things so they sometimes say don’t get my meaning I don’t bother them. And so sometimes we have our flat activities as well. We go and have dinner together and we go hiking together and of course party together, so as something I want to tell other international students as well, like, if they really want to learn more about New Zealand culture and really want to improve their English, they can flat with… Well it doesn’t have to be Kiwis, I mean you can flat with anyone, flat with other international people and really just to know and learn different culture and just be open minded. In the last show was related to outdoor education so I invited one of my best friends because we go tramping together and we do a lot of activities together and he is an outdoor education student so he mentioned so many things and a lot of deeper perspective to the audience and how we can take actions and how we can get started to do those kinds of other activities. Just need to… Got to start from somewhere and yeah… |
| Sally | I think you’ve just touched on a good point is that this broadcasting opportunity gives you guys the opportunity to share your own stories but it also gives you the opportunity to bring in experts or people who are particularly knowledgeable or passionate about the subjects you’re talking about. Laura, have you got any comment on watching people interview and how that transfers over to the audience?  |
| Laura | I guess interviewing skills, it’s not easy, it’s something that you need to learn, and to see the process of the students learning how to ask people of authority some really important questions when they’re not used to dealing with people with authority but here in the studio everybody is on an equal level and so to see them gain the confidence to ask the right questions and get some really important answers for the listeners.  |
| Sally | Just to finish off, then, it might be great to hear from you guys: What advice have you got to other international students? Jack, you’ve just touched on flatting with other New Zealanders or other international students but in terms of really enhancing the international student experience in Canterbury, what would you recommend and that’s for you as international students but also, Laura, you as well.  |
| Jack | Just find what you want to do and go and do it.  |
| Sohana | It’s the same, myself I would say… |
| Sally | Try and find yourself?  |
| Sohana | Yeah. Day by day I am finding something new qualities in me and meeting new people makes me realise there are so many other things to give back and to do.  |
| Sally | Does that come from being outside your home environment? Could you do it if you were in Nepal, do you think?  |
| Sohana | Yeah actually I have been doing it, I grew up in a family where I saw all those things done by my parents like since my childhood they are just involving in social work and things like that and they always told me that giving others makes… It’s the biggest thing you can do in your life. You taking so much from others, so much from the society then why can’t you give a few hours of your life, of your days of your life, and just take some time for others as well? And I have been doing some voluntary back in my country with Red Cross Society which is a charity organisation, organising some blood donation programmes in different colleges, gathering some youth to make some programme regarding women in parliament could be anything or something like that.  |
| Minaho | Like I said before, just being active. Also, say yes to almost every opportunity like for example my friends told me let’s do skydiving and one of my friends asked me to do that and then I was like yeah, why not, let’s do it and then it was really awesome experience. Just try everything that we can do here, it’s probably just only one time for being an international student, it’s a really good experience.  |
| Sohana | After a few years I don’t know where I will be, it’s not sure that I will be in New Zealand for sure so I am just taking advantage of all the opportunities that has knocked on my door so far and I have been involved in so many things and doing so many new things. I have been also trying so many new things like getting involved with new culture and tradition, trying to know what kind of traditions that they have been following. Same like you, learning and testing new things.  |
| Laura | And I think, all of you sharing your stories and your experiences, your histories, your cultures, your hopes and dreams; it’s enriched all of us staff here, we’ve really benefited and it’s been a real pleasure for us to watch and listen and learn from you and ultimately it helps makes the world a better place! You can’t get much better than that! |
| Sally | And quite fortuitously it also brings us back to this idea of the International Student Wellbeing Strategy, being welcomed and valued and not just taking but also giving and making sure that New Zealanders recognise the value of that. Well, “Dhanyebaat,” “Shee shee,” “Arigato” and “Thanks” to you all for taking the time to come and share your really quite personal stories, thank you very much. And everyone listen to STeudaemonia, that would be a good piece of advice.  |