

Text 1

Many people do not speak out about their problems, and things are made worse by the fact that they feel like they are abnormal and alone. However, even though everyone's situation is unique, nearly every person has ever felt lonely, disappointed, and uncomfortable. No one is alone walking down this challenging road. The university is quite an essential part of life, filled with great feelings, however, not without negative emotions.

To start with, the first grade I ever got in Innopolis University was 0 out of 100. That was the Discrete Maths Course test, and I have spent long days preparing for it. I would not tell you a story that I got all 100% after that test. Moreover, I was staring at the textbook without the understanding of nearly everything from the page for a long time. At the same time, many of my classmates were calm, and professors explained every topic briefly, suggesting that we "should know that from school." Looking at all this, I wondered whether I belonged to this place. I will be glad if such thoughts, tiredness, a feeling of dishonest assessment, and loneliness will pass you by, nonetheless, if something like this will bother you, I would like to share what kept me going. We are wired to be social creatures, and there is a lot to be gained from spending time with people, including their support. People would help you to nurture a sense of belonging. There are different ways of how to establish connections. You can make the necessary acquaintances during the university selection. After selection, there is a summer school during which the university conducts various activities to bring students together. However, if after the selection and summer school you still feel uncomfortable, it is never too late to join the university life. I will cover two ways to do this.

Clubs are one way. The university has a massive number of interest clubs. Clubs are usually open and ready to welcome new members at any time. You have to pay to join some clubs; however, for most of them, you do not have to. Some clubs have regular meetings, while others do not. Now, to join a club, you have to go to campus life site and write to the club owners. There are four types of clubs: Tech, Sport, Special Interest, and Art / Culture. In tech clubs, there are clubs like Capture the Flag (cybersecurity games), Ahuratus (cutting-edge technologies), Android Development Club, Low-Level Programming Club, Math Club, AI Community, and Indie Game Dev Club. I found my place at the CTF club, where we gathered a team and participated in various events and competitions in computer security. In sports clubs, there are clubs connected to sports like football, boxing, cheerleading, floorball, volleyball, badminton, sambo/judo, climbing, chess, skateboarding, ping pong, tennis, and others. I train with LSD (League of Sport Development) which main focus is CrossFit. In Special Interest Clubs, there are clubs like Tabletop Games Club, Inno Cooking Club, Club of Anime fans, Speedcubing and Skilltoys, and Strategy Games Club. I enjoy playing tabletop games during weekends. The last but not the least - Art/Culture clubs. Music club, Theatre Community, English, and French clubs, Street, Break and Social Dance Clubs, "In Love with Art" and Miniature Painting Club are Art/Culture clubs. I believe that everyone will find a club for themselves, but if not, It is always possible to create a new one.

The second way is the Student Union. The Student Union organizes such events as Halloween, club fests, and spring balls. Currently, I am a part of the Open-Air dance party organizers team. Besides, student union helps students to cope with challenges on their path, whether these

challenges are conflicts with professors or information overload. Such type of work is impossible without making a lot of new connections.

To summarize, entering clubs and the Student Union is a good idea, mostly because this would probably lead to new friends. New friends, in turn, contribute to improving the quality of life (Emily Sohn, 2016). However, it is worth remembering that neither clubs nor the Student Union is the cure for all the problems at university. There still will be difficulties and obstacles, because life is full of ups and downs, twists and turns, love, and loss.

References:

Emily Sohn (2016). More and more research shows friends are good for your health. https://www.washingtonpost.com/national/health-science/more-and-more-research-shows-friends-are-good-for-your-health/2016/05/26/f249e754-204d-11e6-9e7f-57890b612299_story.html

Text 2

According to the article presented by the University of Illinois "Exercise in a first-year writing course increases retention at broad-access universities", a social-belonging intervention lets freshmen students understand that their possible problems in the university are common and normal, and upper-year students have faced and have coped with them. Thus, it increases the confidence and stabilizes the sense of belonging among first-year students and makes them more resilient to challenges.

As a 4th year student, I understand the feelings and fears of new-coming people and I am ready to share some stories about my first year at Innopolis University. These tellings do not seem unique now, but when I came here I thought it was a disaster to cope with them without losing my mind.

1. When I came here I was not very experienced in programming and felt sad and was frightened when the first assignments were released. I thought that after the first semester here I would be asked to leave the University because I am not smart enough, but you read this message, so I am still here. Moreover, the previous semester was my 4th semester here (in a row) which was very successful and I got all A's. In this case, I have 2 pieces of advice. First one: google a lot - this is one of the most powerful skills and habits in modern life and reading several articles about hard topics may clarify the situation. The second piece of advice is not to be afraid and ask - you may ask your teacher or other students and they can give you very useful information about the problem or at least tell you how to start.
2. Starting life without parents may be a challenging problem too. Now you need to cook for yourself, wash the dishes and clothes. Again, if you find something hard - ask. To me it was challenging to learn to cook with the stove in the dorms as at home I had another type of stove. In this case, you can talk to upper-year students or ask for help from the people who work in the dorm.

3. When you move to the dorm, you start living with new people. These people were raised in different families with a certain culture, so your ways of thinking may be opposite. When I started living with 4 girls, I was very excited - I thought we will cook together and hang out with them. The first time was as I imagined. And then I noticed some issues with our life in a room - girls used my plates and cups but did not wash them, sometimes the trash was not taken out for several days because we did not decide how to organize this process. Here you can do 2 things: talk about rules in advance (or once you noticed some dissatisfaction from life with these guys) - making a schedule of taking the trash out, buying some stuff together (for cleaning or toilet paper), etc - or you can find other neighbors - but in this case, the same situation may happen again.

If none of my problems and solutions are helpful and you feel helpless and lonely I think you should talk to close people - friends, parents, new friends from the university. If they are not near you - give them a call! Laugh is the best cure and spending a few minutes with people you love can give you a magic kick and a good mood for some time. If you want to meet new people do not miss the online and offline activities held in the University - there you can meet new people, get some knowledge in areas you are interested in and spend a good time. If these activities are not the kind of help you prefer, but you understand that you need to share your thoughts and fears, you can consult a university psychologist. She has been working with students for a long time and probably faced students with home-sickness, socialization issues, or something else. So she may help you to solve everything you suffer from and increase the level of your life here.

Of course, my experience is a drop in the ocean of possible thoughts of freshmen. But I think this can give you hope and you may realize that troubles are not endless and after you overcome them, you understand some part of life and become stronger. And this power and knowledge will lead you to success.

Text 3.

Let's start right away with the fact that studying at the University of Innopolis will be difficult. And not only because of the study. I faced my first difficult thing when I moved to the campus: 4 classmates entered the university with me and I wanted to live with them. To our regret, all five-bed rooms were taken, so my classmates moved together in 2 two-bed rooms. I was left alone without a pair, so I had to move to two-bed room with a complete stranger. It was quite insulting and I felt abandoned. My neighbor turned out to be a quiet guy, we did not bother each other and generally came into the room only to sleep. But I still wanted to live with my classmates. The problem was solved by itself with a drop. The neighbor and one of my classmates dropped and I just moved to a free roommate. So you don't need to be afraid of a drop, because it can help you. Just a joke

By the way, life in a room with one person can sooner or later lead to conflicts. Minor misunderstandings may accumulate or one of the neighbors may be in a bad mood. The major thing is to assess how big this conflict is, it can be easily resolved and you can calmly continue to live together or if your life together has reached a dead end, you can always ask

to change the room.

The most important thing is to find acquaintances or even friends outside your room. There are many clubs in Innopolis and you shouldn't hesitate to go there. You may not like all the clubs, but in some, you can find yourself a company. In general, it is not bad to know your classmates, you have several years to study with them and with some, you will do team projects in courses

Also, guys who work or just people who have connections go to clubs. In the game dev club, I found myself the first working off and then my future work. I did not look for it on purpose, just an acquaintance suggested and I agreed. Therefore, if meeting people is not such a good reason to go to a club, then the opportunity to earn extra money can attract you to clubs.

In general, you can work and study, but it's better not from the beginning. You need to calmly unlearn at least a year in order to understand how the learning process is going in Innopolis. Then you can calmly look for a working off or a full job, there are many such guys and some of them even manage to study not in C's.

Actually, studying at university is very different from school. They don't look after you, you have a task - get at least C grade for the courses, so do it as you want. It didn't work out - retake. The retake failed - the second retake. Then the drop

Let's talk a little about drops. Or rather, their threshold is retakes. Retake is a very stressful thing at first, I went through them myself. Three times. But they are not always very tough. Mostly only those who are unlucky or who have not even prepared for retakes can't pass them. I can tell you about a caste of people who hardly ever attend lectures - they work. They appear only during the retake and pass them all. This is a very risky strategy, but there are those who studied this way until the fourth year, and they are not afraid of the drop, because they already have a job.

Once we have discussed the retakes, let's talk about learning itself. I thought that the EGE is the most stressful thing in my life and that I have never experienced this again. Therefore, the final exams began and I realized that the finals are like mini EGE. And this will be repeated every six months. So be mentally prepared that stress can shake your health rather well and do not be afraid to contact a medical center. This happens to everyone and there is nothing to be ashamed of.

Text 4

This idea of intervention is quite new for me and I did not hear about it before. At the begging of my studying, I remember how I attentively listened to every advice that I heard from older students and they were so rare for me.

I am glad to take part in the social-belonging intervention. It is a great opportunity for any kind of freshmen to easily adapt, widely socialize and be successful in studying. With this essay, I would like to help the first-year bachelors with writing down my personal tips and tricks that I learned during 3 years of studying and living in Innopolis city.

Use all opportunities. Enrol to different clubs, attend local events, find hackathons that are at least in Kazan and etc. Try everything. Try to be open to new things in your life, because now you will face them a lot and you need to learn how to cope with them and everywhere you can find new friends. Being open-minded will help you to set a bigger network of people. But more in another tip...

Remember that university is more about networking than studying. This advice is given to me by already graduated students and I am carefully passing it to you. Advice is not proposing you to talk in auditoriums during classes or drinking at the bar with same year students every day, which is also could be the attempt of setting the network, but it is too unhealthy. It is more about not being shy and talk with people. Become acquainted with older students, ask them to meet and make a face-to-face version of the social-belonging intervention. Most of them are interested in making new contacts too. I guarantee that most of the oldest students are already bored with the same people in Innopolis and maybe you will bring new colours in their life. It is useful for everyone, especially at Innopolis University, where I still believe that people are kind and not ordinary ones.

Use the gym. I know that the first time you will be bothered with a lot of other opportunities, which exclude exercising in the gym but remember that your free pass to the sports complex expires after your graduating. You may say that it is too far and you have a lot of time, but statistically, students postpone attending the gym to the end. It is actually a great opportunity to carve a beautiful body, to be more disciplined, to keep your mood positive, to reduce stress, to naturally produce endorphins and to strengthen your health. If you do not know how to use different gym equipment, do not be shy to ask others or you can just enrol to corresponding classes of training.

Buy office-chair. Unfortunately, there are no comfortable chairs in dorms, which will not harm your spine. The chair will keep your posture well and let your spine and buttocks get tired less.

Organize cleaning in your dorm. To live peacefully with other people try to distribute responsibilities and turns of washing dishes/cooking devices (if your roommate will politely lend some of them), taking out the trash, general cleaning and bringing the water. The best way is to write the table on a sheet of A4 paper and keep records of different actions.

Have a friend from Kazan. The nearest big city is Kazan. You may find there different entertainment places, medical institutions which are absent in Innopolis or many other people with different interests if you get tired of IT. This friend can help you to find everything and he or she may help with some advice to what to see, what to visit or where to get something.

I hope these tips will be valuable and help you in your shining future. As one of graduate said in his speech at the matriculation ceremony, when I was a freshman like you: "Do not stop until you drop!"