

# HOW TO FIND STRENGTH AND MOTIVATION FOR STUDIES

**Duration of the project:** 1.3.2018–28.2.2020

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**DIACONIA UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES** is administrating a project “Strength for Studies”, or Voimaa opiskeluun in Finnish. The target of the project is to prevent the suspension of studies, to support students comprehensively during their studies and to improve students’ mental health and coping skills. The project receives funding from the European Social Fund. In this presentation, the focus is on the support models for students who have difficulties in their studies.

## FINDING STRENGTH

### SUPPORT GROUP for later-stage students

The aim is to find strength for studying and personal life. This is done by exploring the self with the help of the group. The method is psychodrama which is an action method. The goal is to find new, meaningful ways of thinking and coping, and to increase self-awareness. Every meeting has its own theme chosen by a member of the group, e.g. self-acceptance, fear of social situations, difficulties in close relationships.

### The CRITERIA to find the right students for the support group:

- ECTS credits
- Absences
- Other worries

Based on the criteria, students are identified by study guidance counsellors, student counsellors and lecturers.

Students are contacted and interviewed if they are interested in participating.

During the interviews, emphasis is placed on the importance of commitment and confidentiality.

## FINISHING UP

### SUPPORT GROUP for students who return to studies after a break and for students who have difficulties finishing their studies during the time leading up to graduation

In the meetings, emphasis is placed on the thesis process and on self-management skills.

Study guidance counsellors contact the students in need and are active in introducing students to the group.

## GETTING STARTED

### SUPPORT GROUP for students who have had difficulties getting started with their studies

Four meetings with fixed topics:

- 1) identity and values
- 2) time management
- 3) self-perception, understanding of self as a learner, individual thought patterns and processes
- 4) stress and wellbeing



**Project website (in Finnish):** [voimaaopiskeluun.diak.fi](http://voimaaopiskeluun.diak.fi)

The project is administered by Diaconia University of Applied Sciences in Finland, and is carried out in cooperation with Nyyti ry, Research Foundation for Studies and Education Otus and Diaconia College of Finland. The project receives funding from the European Social Fund.

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